

THE AMERICAN LEGION

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

October 1997

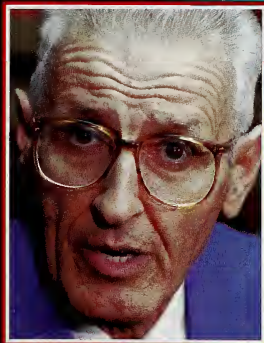
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ALASKAN
CRUISES
PAGE 38

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THE AMERICAN LEGION

Vol. 143, No. 4

The Magazine for a Strong America

October 1997

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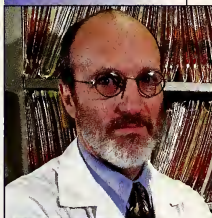
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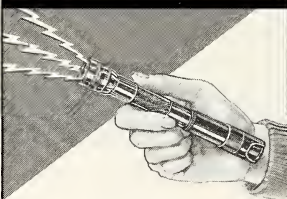
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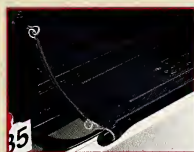
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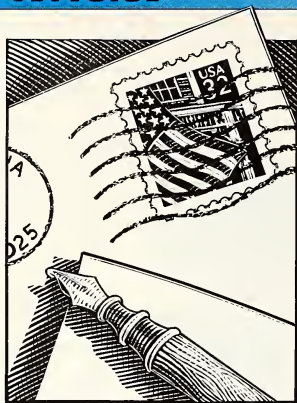
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Editor's note: Due to the heavy volume of responses to "Death Strikes the Liberty," we feel compelled to devote most of this department's space to your comments. We regret we cannot run all of the letters.

Skipper's Report

I WOULD like to comment on "Death Strikes the Liberty" by Gurney Williams III, which appeared in the July '97 issue of THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE. I was the captain of USS Liberty (AGTR-5) with the rank of commander.

The article is timely and well-written but omits several facts that would help readers understand the savage nature of the unprovoked attack and place the numbers of killed and wounded in perspective.

Liberty was performing its assigned mission in international waters off Gaza where we had every right to be. The ship arrived at its initial point of patrol about 6:30 a.m., June 8, 1967, and slowed to five knots on a westerly heading. The ship came under surveillance on eight occasions by unidentified aircraft.

By their own admission, the Israeli Navy battle-plot personnel identified the ship as the Liberty and placed an identifying marker on their plotting board at approximately 6:37 a.m. They neglected to update the time of succeeding sightings and failed to update changes in the position of the ship. The ship had traveled some 37 nautical miles to the west of the initial con-

tact. Had the ship been able to achieve 28-30 knots, as reported by the motor torpedo boats, it would have been 210 nautical miles west of the position where it was initially identified.

Shortly before the attack, someone in the Israeli naval battle-plot room decided that the marker information was old and had it removed from the battle-plot layout. Had they maintained their plot status in a professional manner, they would have known that Liberty was still in the area and that its actual speed was five knots.

Liberty had only four .50 caliber machine guns for self-defense (effective range of about one-half mile). Since Liberty remained at least 12 nautical miles from land, it should have been impossible to conclude that Liberty had shelled any area in the vicinity of El Arish or any shore facility.

The crews on the two gun mounts on the bow were killed during the initial strike, and the port side bridge-level gun could not be manned because two 55-gallon drums of gasoline on the deck below were burning. It was not possible to man the starboard gun because our life boat was burning on the deck below the mount. The ship was defenseless.

Another example of gross negligence and incompetence on the part of the attacking forces came when the torpedo boats tracked Liberty at 28-30 knots. Liberty could not steam at 28-30 knots, even if towed by an aircraft

carrier. Can you believe that the judge reviewing the Israeli court of inquiry accepted the torpedo boat's plotted speed of Liberty as accurate?

The article indicates that 34 were killed and 171 wounded out of a crew of 290 officers and men. Thus Liberty sustained a casualty rate of nearly 70 percent.

The article does not mention that Liberty was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, that the Combat Action ribbon was authorized for all aboard, that 205 Purple Hearts were awarded, that two awards of the Navy Cross were made posthumously or that several officers and men were awarded the Silver or Bronze Star medals. I was presented with the Medal of Honor by the secretary of the Navy in ceremonies at the Navy yard in Washington, D.C., in June 1968.

Had it not been for the outstanding performance of all aboard, it would not have been possible to keep the ship afloat, and each officer and man share in the honor bestowed upon me.

If the attack was simply a case of mistaken identity, as Israel claims, why is so much information still highly classified? Although parts of a report prepared by William Gerhard of the National Security Agency ("Attack on the USS Liberty" SRH-256) have been declassified, it is not scheduled for another security review until April 2011.

What about the involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency, if any? Rumor has it that the CIA was told, at least twice before the ship arrived off Gaza, that the ship should keep clear or it would be attacked. How did Israel know of the ship's destination before we arrived? Our orders were

Please turn page

WE WANT YOUR OPINIONS

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE welcomes letters concerning articles that appear in the publication. Be sure to include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing. Send your opinions to:

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You can also contact us via e-mail directly or through the World Wide Web:

e-mail: tal@legion.org
Internet: <http://www.legion.org>

Corrections

THE author of "Sousa's Hit Parade for the Legion" (July) mistakenly identified one of the individuals cited in the article. The correct name of the Legionnaire is Maynard H. Mires. We regret the error.

DUE to erroneous information provided by the U.S. Air Force, a photograph in the August issue misidentified an F-104 Starfighter as an F-102 Delta Dagger.

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classified. Did the Israelis have a mole reporting our movements?

During memorial services at Arlington National Cemetery on June 8, 1997, I urged that Israel and the United States release full details about the attack. I feel that the crew of *Liberty* and the rest of the American people deserve to know what happened, why it came about and why no U.S. Navy planes arrived during the attack or for so many hours after.

For many years, I wanted to believe that the attack was a result of confusion and error, but I have come to realize that it resulted from gross incompetence and aggravated dereliction of duty on the part of many Israeli officers and men—or that the attack might well have been deliberate.

*William McGonagle
Palm Springs, California*

Answers Needed

PLEASE, please, someone give us some reasonable explanation for this unconscionable loss. How can this country allow such a terrible tragedy to occur? Thirty-four fine young sailors were lost and 171 wounded without any reasonable explanation.

The American Legion obviously has been unable to acquire real answers from either our own government or from the perpetrator of this carnage, Israel. As I read the reports, both sources appear to be untruthful. Please continue to seek out the truth. We deserve to know.

*Bert J. Gast
Des Plaines, Illinois*

I RESENT Gurney Williams' article and cite articles which appeared in the September 1984 issue of *The Atlantic*, the June 21, 1997, issue of *The Arizona Republic*, AIPAC Memorandum and *The Jerusalem Report* Nov. 21. As stated in the June 21, 1997, issue of *The Arizona Republic*: "In 1967, ...Robert McNamara testified in Congress that his examination of the record revealed that the Israeli attack was not deliberate."

From *The Atlantic*: "On June 10, 1967, in a formal apology, the government of Israel undertook to pay compensation to the families of the men killed and to the men wounded in the

attack. A year later, Israel paid out a total of \$3,323,000 to the families of the 34 servicemen killed, and in April of 1969 it paid another \$3,566,547 to the wounded."

*Arthur T. Wasserman
Palm Beach, Florida*

I AM very glad that at long last this matter is being given national publicity. For many years the Israeli lobby has been able to keep the wraps on this explosive story.

It is disgusting that Secretary McNamara and President Johnson not only refused to come to the aid of the *USS Liberty* but would not permit anyone else to do so. Johnson's comment that he didn't give a damn if the ship sank shows what kind of a man he was.

*Andrew B. McAllister
Chicago, Illinois*

FORMER Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's convenient loss of memory is typical of one who has made as many mistakes in judgment as he did. His tour of duty as Secretary of Defense was, to say the least, a disgrace to his country. The question remains, was he on our side?

*J.R. Bailey
Tucson, Arizona*

I AM writing first to thank your magazine for fearless reporting in the article "Death Strikes the *Liberty*." I was captivated by the prose and the professionalism of Gurney Williams III. The article uncovered details of this American military tragedy that I had not read before.

My second reason for writing is to salute and encourage Lt. Cmdr. David Lewis. I was on active duty with the Navy during both the *Liberty* and *Pueblo* incidents.

However, the fact is not that people do not care, it is rather that the deskbound officers in the big White House do not care—and have not cared for quite some time.

*David J. Sheehan
Columbia, Louisiana*

Invasive Costs

IN REALITY, the "invasion" to which Peter Brimelow refers ("Invisible Economy," July '97) is

far greater than he has presented in his limited space. In California, the assembly just passed a budget that included \$700 million to cover benefits, including food stamps, for poor and disabled legal immigrants.

Last year, California alone spent \$83.7 million for prenatal care for more than 70,000 illegal immigrant women.

In 1995, 78,386 "undocumented" women gave birth with deliveries funded by MediCal. These children are now citizens.

*J.J. Maher
Monrovia, California*

Good Help

AS A member of The American Legion of some 10 years standing, let me commend the Legion for its willingness to help its members with programs that return benefits many times more than the cost of dues.

For example, a local Legion Post helped me engage in a long, long battle with the VA over a war-time injury...which in the end at least provided highly discounted prescriptions.

My family has been using the Legion's own prescription service and has obtained discounts not otherwise available in our circumstances.

I have twice used the Legion's discount deal with Pearle Vision and have saved well over \$100.

*David Arpin
Jacksonville, Florida*

'Mean' Testing

I RECENTLY received my card for VA hospital care and learned (in my opinion) that the VA discriminates against certain vets who are fortunate enough to have a good income.

The charges are set by your income, which I feel is unfair. A vet is a vet, or is he?

I think all vets should be treated equally and charged the same for equal services.

Why discriminate because some, including me, were fortunate to earn a good income.

Did this have any relationship to my military service? Is someone ripping off the vets?

*Paul Koren
Albany, New York* □

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ZOCOR[®]

(SIMVASTATIN)

PLEASE READ THIS SUMMARY CAREFULLY, AND THEN ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT ZOCOR. NO ADVERTISEMENT CAN PROVIDE ALL THE INFORMATION NEEDED TO PRESCRIBE A DRUG. THIS ADVERTISEMENT DOES NOT TAKE THE PLACE OF CAREFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR DOCTOR. ONLY YOUR DOCTOR HAS THE TRAINING TO WEIGH THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF A PRESCRIPTION DRUG FOR YOU.

USES OF ZOCOR

ZOCOR is a prescription drug that is indicated as an addition to diet for many patients with high cholesterol when diet and exercise are inadequate. For patients with coronary heart disease (CHD) and high cholesterol, ZOCOR is indicated as an addition to diet to reduce the risk of death by reducing coronary death; to reduce the risk of heart attack; and to reduce the risk for undergoing myocardial revascularization procedures (coronary artery bypass grafting and percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty).

WHEN ZOCOR SHOULD NOT BE USED

Some people should not take ZOCOR. Discuss this with your doctor.

ZOCOR should not be used by patients who are allergic to any of its ingredients. In addition to the active ingredient simvastatin, each tablet contains the following inactive ingredients: cellulose, lactose, magnesium stearate, iron oxides, talc, titanium dioxide, and starch. Butylated hydroxyanisole is added as a preservative.

Patients with liver problems: ZOCOR should not be used by patients with active liver disease or repeated blood test results indicating possible liver problems. (See WARNINGS.)

Women who are or may become pregnant: Pregnant women should not take ZOCOR because it may harm the fetus. **Women of childbearing age should not take ZOCOR unless it is highly unlikely that they will become pregnant.** If a woman does become pregnant while on ZOCOR, she should stop taking the drug and talk to her doctor at once.

Women who are breast-feeding should not take ZOCOR.

WARNINGS

Liver: About 1% of patients who took ZOCOR in clinical trials developed elevated levels of some liver enzymes. Patients who had these increases usually had no symptoms. Elevated liver enzymes usually returned to normal levels when therapy with ZOCOR was stopped.

Your doctor should perform routine blood tests to check these enzymes before you start treatment with ZOCOR and periodically thereafter (for example, semiannually) for your first year of treatment or until one year after your last elevation in dose. If your enzyme levels increase, your doctor should order more frequent tests. If your liver enzyme levels remain unusually high, your doctor should discontinue your medication.

Tell your doctor about any liver disease you may have had in the past and about how much alcohol you consume. ZOCOR should be used with caution in patients who consume large amounts of alcohol.

Muscle: Tell your doctor right away if you experience any muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness at any time during treatment with ZOCOR, particularly if you have a fever or if you are generally not feeling well, so your doctor can decide if ZOCOR should be stopped. Some patients may have muscle pain or weakness while taking ZOCOR. Rarely, this can include muscle breakdown resulting in kidney damage. The risk of muscle breakdown is greater in patients taking certain other drugs along with ZOCOR, such as the lipid-lowering drug Lipid[®] (gemfibrozil), a fibrinolytic; lipid-lowering doses of nicotinic acid (niacin); the antibiotic erythromycin; antifungal drugs that are azole derivatives, such as itraconazole; or drugs that suppress the immune system (called immunosuppressive drugs, such as Sandimmune[®] [cyclosporine]). Therapy with ZOCOR should be temporarily interrupted if you are going to take an azole derivative antifungal medication, such as itraconazole. Patients using ZOCOR along with any of these other drugs should be carefully monitored by their physician. The risk of muscle breakdown is greater in patients with kidney problems or diabetes.

If you have conditions that can increase your risk of muscle breakdown, which in turn can cause kidney damage, your doctor should temporarily withhold or stop ZOCOR. Such conditions include severe infection, low blood pressure, major surgery, trauma, severe metabolic, endocrine and electrolyte disorders, and uncontrolled seizures. Discuss this with your doctor, who can explain these conditions to you.

Because there are risks in combining therapy with ZOCOR with lipid-lowering doses of nicotinic acid (niacin) or with drugs that suppress the immune system, your doctor should carefully weigh the potential benefits and risks. He or she should also carefully monitor patients for any muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness, particularly during the initial months of therapy and if the dose of either drug is increased. Your doctor may also monitor the level of certain muscle enzymes in your body, but there is no assurance that such monitoring will prevent the occurrence of severe muscle disease.

PRECAUTIONS

Before starting treatment with ZOCOR, try to lower your cholesterol by other methods such as diet, exercise, and weight loss. Ask your doctor about how best to do this. Any other medical problems that can cause high cholesterol should also be treated.

ZOCOR is less effective in patients with the rare disorder known as homozygous familial hypercholesterolemia.

Drug Interactions: Because of possible serious drug interactions, it is important to tell your doctor what

other drugs you are taking, including those obtained without a prescription.

ZOCOR[®] (simvastatin) can interact with Lipid, niacin, erythromycin, certain antifungal drugs, and drugs that suppress the immune system (called immunosuppressive drugs, such as Sandimmune). (See WARNINGS, Muscle.)

Some patients taking lipid-lowering agents similar to ZOCOR and coumarin anticoagulants (a type of blood thinner) have experienced bleeding and/or increased blood clotting time. Patients taking these medicines should have their blood tested before starting therapy with ZOCOR and should continue to be monitored.

Endocrine (Hormone) Function: ZOCOR and other drugs in this class may affect the production of certain hormones. Caution should be exercised if a drug used to lower cholesterol levels is administered to patients also receiving other drugs (e.g., ketoconazole, spironolactone, cimetidine) that may decrease the levels or activity of hormones. If you are taking any such drugs, tell your doctor.

Central Nervous System Toxicity; Cancer, Mutations, Impairment of Fertility: Like most prescription drugs, ZOCOR was required to be tested on animals before it was marketed for human use. Often these tests were designed to achieve higher drug concentrations than humans achieve at recommended dosing. In some tests, the animals had damage to the nerves in the central nervous system. In studies of mice with high doses of ZOCOR, the likelihood of certain types of cancerous tumors increased. No evidence of mutations or of damage to genetic material has been seen. In one study with ZOCOR, there was decreased fertility in male rats.

Pregnancy: Pregnant women should not take ZOCOR because it may harm the fetus.

Safety in pregnancy has not been established. There have been no reports of birth defects in the children of patients taking ZOCOR. However, in studies with lipid-lowering agents similar to ZOCOR, there have been rare reports of birth defects of the skeleton and digestive system. Therefore, women of childbearing age should not take ZOCOR unless it is highly unlikely they will become pregnant. If a woman does become pregnant while taking ZOCOR, she should stop taking the drug and talk to her doctor at once. The active ingredient of ZOCOR did not cause birth defects in rats at 6 times the human dose or in rabbits at 4 times the human dose.

Nursing Mothers: Drugs taken by nursing mothers may be present in their breast milk. Because of the potential for serious adverse reactions in nursing infants, a woman taking ZOCOR should not breast-feed. (See WHEN ZOCOR SHOULD NOT BE USED.)

Pediatric Use: ZOCOR is not recommended for children or patients under 20 years of age.

SIDE EFFECTS

Most patients tolerate treatment with ZOCOR well; however, like all prescription drugs, ZOCOR can cause side effects, and some of them can be serious. Side effects that do occur are usually mild and short-lived. Only your doctor can weigh the risks versus the benefits of any prescription drug. In clinical studies with ZOCOR, less than 1.5% of patients dropped out of the studies because of side effects. In a large, long-term study, patients taking ZOCOR experienced similar side effects to those patients taking placebo (sugar pills). Some of the side effects that have been reported with ZOCOR or related drugs are listed below. This list is not complete. Be sure to ask your doctor about side effects before taking ZOCOR and to discuss any side effects that occur.

Digestive System: Constipation, diarrhea, upset stomach, gas, heartburn, stomach pain/cramps, anorexia, loss of appetite, nausea, inflammation of the pancreas, hepatitis, jaundice, fatty changes in the liver, and, rarely, severe liver damage and failure, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

Muscle, Skeletal: Muscle cramps, aches, pain, and weakness; joint pain; muscle breakdown.

Nervous System: Dizziness, headache, insomnia, tingling, memory loss, damage to nerves causing weakness and/or loss of sensation and/or abnormal sensations, anxiety, depression, tremor, loss of balance, psychic disturbances.

Skin: Rash, itching, hair loss, dryness, nodules, discoloration.

Eye/Senses: Blurred vision, altered taste sensation, progression of cataracts, eye muscle weakness.

Hypersensitivity (Allergic) Reactions: On rare occasions, a wide variety of symptoms have been reported to occur either alone or together in groups (referred to as a syndrome) that appeared to be based on allergic-type reactions, which may rarely be fatal. These have included one or more of the following: a severe generalized reaction that may include shortness of breath, wheezing, digestive symptoms, and low blood pressure and even shock; an allergic reaction with swelling of the face, lips, tongue and/or throat with difficulty swallowing or breathing; symptoms mimicking lupus (a disorder in which a person's immune system may attack parts of his or her own body); severe muscle and blood vessel inflammation; bruises; various disorders of blood cells (that could result in anemia, infection, or blood clotting problems) or abnormal blood tests; inflamed or painful joints; hives; fatigue and weakness; sensitivity to sunlight; fever, chills; flushing; difficulty breathing; and severe skin disorders that vary from rash to a serious burn-like shedding of skin all over the body, including mucous membranes such as the lining of the mouth.

Other: Loss of sexual desire, breast enlargement, impotence.

Laboratory Tests: Liver function test abnormalities including elevated alkaline phosphatase and bilirubin; thyroid function abnormalities.

NOTE: This summary provides important information about ZOCOR. If you would like more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist to let you read the professional labeling and then discuss it with them.



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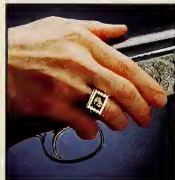


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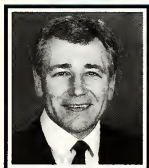
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SHOULD CONGRESS RENEW THE PRESIDENT'S 'FAST-TRACK' AUTHORITY?

Sen. Chuck Hagel (R—Nebraska)



YES Today, the United States finds itself unilaterally disarming in the intense global competition for new markets. For the first time since 1974, the president lacks fast-track authority to negotiate agreements that would help open up new markets and reduce international barriers to U.S. exports.

Fast-track authority permits the president to negotiate trade agreements which then must be approved or disapproved without modification by the Congress. Under our Constitution, the Congress alone has the power "to lay and collect... duties" and "to regulate commerce with foreign nations." The Constitution, however, uniquely empowers the president to send and receive ambassadors and negotiate with foreign powers. More than 20 years ago, the fast-track mechanism was created to accommodate this divided authority and enable our nation to press for a world economic system based on free markets, free trade and free people.

I can only, however, support "clean" fast-track authority without the labor and environmental side agreements advocated by many in the administration. To this end, I am a co-sponsor of legislation introduced by Sen. Richard Lugar, the Trade Agreement Implementation Reform Act, that would provide such authority.

The continued growth of our economy depends on trade. In the past 50 years, trade's share of the world's gross domestic product grew from 7 percent to 21 percent. Today, trade makes up 24 percent of the U.S. economy. This decade, export growth has created 23 percent of all new U.S. jobs, and those export-related jobs pay 13 percent more than the national average.

No nation will enter into negotiations with the United States if any agreement reached has no meaning. As long as the president lacks the ability to present such agreements to the Congress for our clean approval or disapproval—and bad agreements deserve to be defeated—our nation will be endangering its ability to compete.

It is time to restore a clean fast-track negotiating authority. □

Rep. Sherrod Brown (D—Ohio)



NO Supporters of NAFTA promised more jobs, a favorable trade balance with Mexico and an improved environment along the U.S.-Mexican border.

Three and a half years later, they have been proven tragically wrong. Since Congress passed NAFTA, our \$1.7 billion trade surplus with Mexico has become a \$16 billion deficit, an estimated 625,000 U.S. jobs have been lost, and environmental pressures have increased as the maquiladora workforce has grown by 50 percent.

Despite these failures, proponents of unregulated free trade are poised to move this fall to further liberalize international trade. Free trade advocates want a renewal of fast-track authority to expand the flawed NAFTA to Chile and perhaps other Latin American countries. Should they succeed, veterans who served overseas will see even more of their own jobs shipped abroad.

For two decades, Congress has considered international trade agreements under fast-track procedures. This process requires that Congress consider trade agreements within very restrictive deadlines, and without the ability to amend agreements negotiated by the president. The time has come for Congress to reassert its constitutional authority and once again become a full partner in developing and implementing trade agreements.

At the dawn of this century, when abuses of worker rights were rampant in the United States, our government stepped in with minimum wage, child labor and workplace safety laws. With the globalization of trade, today's economy presents new threats to worker rights, since multinational corporations and finance capitalists are no longer guided by local or even national interests, but by the dictates of the global free market. Thus, it is critical that the U.S. negotiate international trade agreements which include strong labor and environmental safeguards.

Trade is not just about statistics or abstract economic theory. It's mainly about families and strong communities. Trade agreements which lack effective safeguards, however, will continue to fail American workers and farms. □

Your Opinions Count, Too.

Senators and representatives are interested in constituent viewpoints. You may express your views by writing The Honorable (name), U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510, or The Honorable (name), House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. You may call the U.S. Senate at (202) 224-3121; the House at (202) 225-3121.

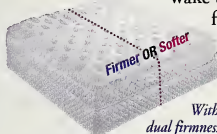
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EYE SURGERY STUDIED

THOUSANDS of near-sighted troops frustrated by the military's ban on corrective eye surgery might be seeing light at the end of the tunnel.

The Air Force and Navy are testing laser surgery called "photorefractive keratectomy," or PRK, which can improve vision and end reliance on glasses.

Results so far on Navy SEALs and non-flying Air Force members are promising and ended the current ban on the procedure.

Under existing rules, refractive eye surgery, although widely available to civilians, automatically disqualifies people from joining the military. And military members who have it done may be discharged unless they get a medical board's approval to keep serving.

The ban dates to a time when "radial keratectomy," or RK, was the main corrective eye surgery.

RK has been shown to weaken eyeballs and cause vision problems at high altitudes and sometimes at night.

PRK, however, appears to offer excellent results with few side effects. PRK uses laser light to burn a thin layer off the cornea so light entering the eye focuses clearly on the retina. For some nearsighted persons, PRK has improved 20/400 vision to virtually perfect 20/20 or even 20/15, Air Force doctors report.

They say it could be three years before they're ready to recommend whether PRK should be allowed, and for which troops. The procedure might be most in demand by personnel who want to be pilots but are too nearsighted to meet service standards.

MORE EDUCATION

SENIOR officers should head back to school for additional professional military training, according to a study group led by former Defense Secretary Dick Cheney.

Officers need more formal training in joint military operations and in ethics, said a 26-member panel that included several former vice chairmen and a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "Jointness" is increasingly important. Because of the drawdown, the services now must pool resources to conduct most operations. Thus, senior officers need to know more about how all services operate.

And in an era of embarrassing sex scandals, the panel said ethics and leadership skills need to be re-emphasized for senior officers. Additional instruction in such fields as math, science and engineering might also be advisable to keep up with rapid changes in technology, the panel said.

OVERSEAS BONUSES PLANNED

THE services expect soon to offer enlisted troops \$2,000 to stay overseas for an extra year.

If that sounds expensive, military auditors say it's cheaper to pay troops extra to stay abroad than it is to move them back home and move their replacements overseas.

Already the services offer troops with critical skills several incentives to prolong overseas tours. Among them, \$80 a month in extra pay, 30 days extra leave, or 15 days leave and free round-trip travel to the United States.

The \$2,000 bonus would be instead of, not in addition to, the other incentives. And each service can decide which troops with which job skills are eligible for the cash.

READINESS, ECONOMY DEBATED

DREAD of being stuck in a unit that's only partly manned, poorly armed and not fully trained can subside, at least for now. At the urging of the military, Congress has rejected "tiered readiness" as a way to stretch increasingly tight defense budgets.

The controversial plan, which received some support in the Senate, would have condemned many troops to "have not" units intentionally slighted of personnel, materiel and training to divert resources to units designated for full readiness.

Most troops hated the idea because it guaranteed that many would wind up in struggling, "have not" outfits.

Military leaders hated it too, saying resource cuts would hurt morale in units that received less without greatly improving readiness in units that received more.

Supporters, including Sen. John McCain, an Arizona Republican, argued that skimpy defense budgets are making it impossible to keep all units fully ready. Tiered readiness, supporters said, would at least ensure some units received all the personnel, training and weapons they needed to fight and win a war.

IN THE NEWS

BRANCHES of Nations Bank are opening in commissaries around the country.... Congress has killed gender-segregated recruit training, at least until a Senate commission reports on the issue a year from now.... Military versions of "Power Bar" snacks and sports drinks are coming soon to a training field near you.... Generals and admirals would be allowed to extend their careers five extra years under legislation approved by the Senate.... The cost of child care will inch up \$1 to \$2 a week this fall at military child development centers. □

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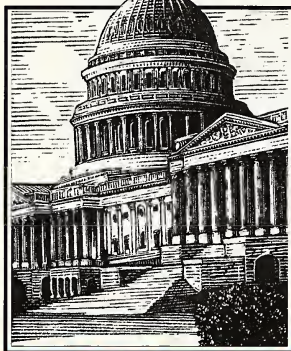
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By Cliff Kincaid

Mining the Store

AS policymakers debate security for military installations abroad, consider what could have happened to the Pentagon itself. In a dramatic story, WJLA television in Washington, D.C., proved that a terrorist could have entered the Pentagon, planted a bomb, and escaped on the subway.

"I was, quite frankly, shocked and appalled at the lack of security," declared Rep. James Traficant of Ohio, in a letter to Defense Secretary William Cohen. Cohen promised a "thorough review" of the Pentagon.

To demonstrate the problem, a producer from WJLA drove a van through two security gates and got access to the Pentagon building through a cargo area. He did not have to produce any identification or security clearances.

The van could have been a truck bomb, Traficant said. Or the driver could have walked "directly into the Pentagon office complex with a weapon."

Un-Bare Arms

THE White House proposal for a crash program to develop an AIDS vaccine sounds worthwhile. But consumer watchdog Barbara Low Fisher warns that military personnel could be the guinea pigs.

"We don't know for sure if they're going to experiment on soldiers with this AIDS vaccine," she tells THE

AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE. But she suspects this could be the case because service personnel have been subjected to experimental drugs and vaccines in the past. An AIDS vaccine, she warns, could end up injuring, killing or causing genetic changes in humans.

Fisher is president of the National Vaccine Information Center, a group based in Vienna, Virginia, which exposes risks associated with vaccinations of all kinds. Since 1992, she has been telling Congress that Gulf War illnesses are linked to multiple vaccinations our troops took before going to war.

A related controversy involves a 31-page report by Human Life International that the United Nations has been implicated in the use of a secret birth control vaccine in the Philippines. Stirling D. Scruggs of the U.N. Population Fund dismisses the report as "unfounded."

Aping Their Better

IS Ronald Reagan merely the "actor who became president" and best remembered as a chimp's co-star in the movie *Bedtime for Bonzo*? That's how a children's history text, *A History of Us*, portrayed the former president.

Joanne Drake, chief of staff to the retired Reagan, called the textbook "disturbing," saying the material wrongly portrays the former president "through petty and foolish innuendoes." She says Reagan is getting "far less respect than any president deserves."

Responding to numerous complaints, including one from Reagan's son, radio personality Michael Reagan, Oxford University Press yanked the photo, replacing it with one of Reagan riding a horse. Kathleen DeBoer, speaking for Oxford, admits the monkey photo was "undignified."

The Washington-based *Campus Report*, published by an education watchdog group, calls the textbook an example of political indoctrination in the schools. "Nothing could be further from the truth," asserts DeBoer.

Despite the changes, the text still insists that, under Reagan, "The rich got very rich, and the poor got much

poorer," and that his economic policies "didn't work."

Heavy Metal Rap

WITH chemical arsenals supposedly outlawed, the international community now wants to prohibit the use of depleted uranium (DU) weapons which gave the U.S. a significant battlefield advantage in the Persian Gulf War but raised health concerns. Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark is leading an effort to have them declared a violation of international law.

DU, a material twice as dense as lead, provides added protection for combat vehicles and makes up rounds that shoot farther and faster and penetrate better.

A new book, *Metal of Dishonor*, alleges medical risks for troops and environmental harm from the weapons. The book also highlights Clark's role in setting up a "war crimes tribunal" that indicted President George Bush and Gen. Colin Powell for their roles in the Gulf War. Clark opposes U.S. military involvement practically everywhere and advocates lifting economic sanctions on Iraq.

Pay Now, Fly Scared

AS American astronauts were risking their lives going aboard the crippled Russian space station Mir, NASA was diverting \$1 billion from its own budget so that the Russians could keep their commitments to build parts for the International Space Station. Rep. James Sensenbrenner Jr. of Wisconsin, a critic of Russian involvement, asks, "How much will future Russian cooperation cost us?"

Sensenbrenner, chairman of the House Science Committee, warns, "We're just three years into a program that will last another 15 years, and the cost of working with the Russians has already reached \$1 billion." The program was sold as a way to cut costs.

A foreign policy of cooperation with Russia has been placed above scientific, health and safety considerations, the congressman suggests, adding that U.S. taxpayers were promised a rose garden of internationalism but were given "a few thorns." □

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BEAR NECESSITIES



SOFT SPOKEN
After her second liver transplant, this young Minnesotan makes a new friend, "Buddy Bear."

This fuzzy friend brings comfort and kind words to seriously ill and abused kids.

A CHILD sits in his hospital bed, pain etched across his face. He clutches a little bear called Spinoza tightly to his chest. Loosening his grip as his hirsute companion begins to croon, the boy gazes into the bear's eyes, telling it the secrets he refuses to reveal to doctors, nurses and even his own parents. Spinoza listens, learning where he hurts most and how the condition feels. Eventually, fatigue wins out over pain, and the boy falls asleep.

Medical staff move into the room and remove a cassette recorder. Back in the hospital hallway, they play back the boy's testimony. After listening to the conversation, doctors change the boy's medications, reducing his pain and allowing him to feel better.

Growing up can be tough. Most kids endure tremendous stress just dealing with problems such as not having the coolest brand of shoes or the hippest hairstyle. Too many others, however, only wish for such mundane concerns.

Thousands of children suffer from life-

threatening or chronic illnesses and major organ failure. Even more deal with profound mental retardation or severe emotional and psychological trauma. Still others face each day without parents who have passed on, or perhaps the children simply await that fate themselves.

No matter how intense the suffering or how hopeless the cause might appear, Americans never give up. That commitment to comfort children in need lies at the heart of a new program responding to the needs of children in distress.

The "buddy bear project" from The Spinoza Co. provides specially designed teddy bears for children needing extra comfort during frightening times.

"The project has proven itself at the Post and Department levels, exemplifying the caring nature of members of The American Legion family," says Elmer Fuhrhop, chairman of the National Commission on Children & Youth. Because of this record, the National organization endorsed the project under Res. 10 (Children and Youth) at the last Spring Meetings.

"Knowing what this gift means to a child, to that child's family, makes it all worthwhile," says James W. Crawford, commander of Jenkins-Vaughn Post 97 in Cardington, Ohio. "When I presented our first Post-sponsored bear to a 4-year-old boy it gave me a big tug at my heart," he says.

Nationally, nearly 7,500 children have received bears since the project began, with nearly one-third sponsored by Posts, Units or Squadrons.

THESE are not just off-the-shelf teddy bears. Each Spinoza has a tape player tucked in his tummy to play any of nine therapeutic audio cassettes. The tapes teach children about loss and grief, breathing and relaxation techniques, bonding and self esteem, stress management, creativity and more. There is a cost involved in producing both the bears and the tapes. Posts must raise \$135.50 to cover the production, shipping and handling costs of each bear. In Minnesota, sales tax must apply.

The cost isn't really much of a factor compared to the good that comes from giving a bear to a child. Crawford's favorite story, recounted earlier, puts money concerns in their place.

After listening to a Spinoza representative at

Please turn to page 66

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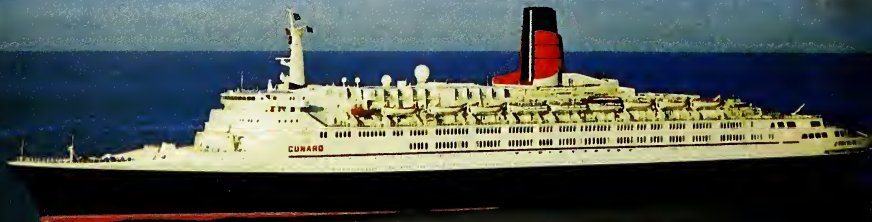
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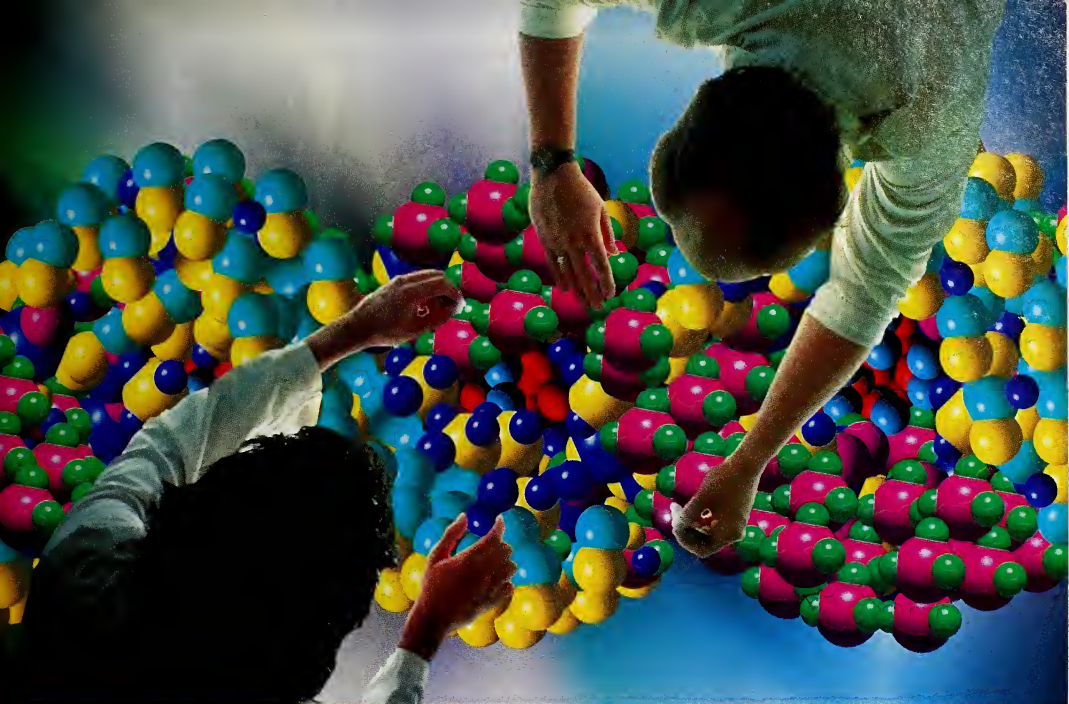
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HEART-ALM 10/97



Altered States

Does science overstep ethical boundaries when it tampers with genetic makeups—particularly our own?

By Gurney Williams III

IN THE beginning, Dr. Ian Wilmut, a bald, bearded scientist, created a sheep embryo as small as the period at the end of this sentence. He implanted it in a ewe's uterus, trying to make the first mammal cloned from a single adult-animal cell. He and a team at the Roslin Institute in Scotland eventually produced one creamy-white pink-nosed sheep, a genetic copy of its

mother. The scientific breakthrough, in turn, engendered a lot of woolly thinking about cloning armies of Hitlers—and a major debate about how far humans can go in playing God.

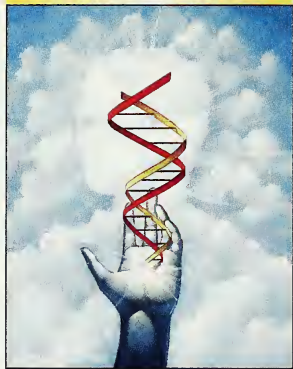
In the beginning, Wilmut's attempts didn't work. The only thing he cloned was failure, again and again, using up 276 tiny sheep embryos until finally one grew to term in 148 days and was born July 5, 1996. He named it Dolly, after buxom country singer Dolly Parton, because the cells to make it came from the mammary glands of the six-year-old Finn Dorset ewe whose twin it became. Through a publicist, Parton said that she was "honored" and that there was no "baaaaad publicity."

Dolly's story doesn't read like Genesis or *Brave New World* or even *Juras-*

sic Park. But like classic creation stories, the birth of Dolly spawned weighty arguments about ethics and the relationship between God and humanity. The day the sheep's birth announcement leaked to a British newspaper last February, President Bill Clinton asked an 18-member commission to investigate "serious ethical questions," particularly about cloning humans. Dolly's arrival reminded many other Americans of unresolved issues concerning abortion and research on embryos and recalled some dark history of attempts to create a master race. The hold-the-cigars birth made us uncomfortably aware of how hard it is for us in a highly scientific age to think through the implications of our discoveries. For now, in fact, the most interesting part of

Gurney Williams III wrote From Mean Streets to Clean Streets for the September issue.

Altered States



the story of Dolly is how we react. "It's not the sheep," says Rabbi Moshe D. Tendler, a professor of biology and an expert on medical ethics at Yeshiva University in New York. "It's that we behave like sheep."

Such thinking has produced several myths scientists have tried to dispel.

One myth, for example, is that cloning is new. For years, gene-jockeying crop scientists have mass-produced plants so alike they seem to have come off an assembly line. Monsanto's Bollgard cotton, planted on almost 2 million acres in 1996, comes loaded with a gene to help it fight bollworms without insecticides. Scientists have long made living copies of animals including frogs, cows and even other sheep. The technology is so well known that a growing number of college undergraduates do cloning experiments—at least in making copies of living bacteria.

No matter how big the consequences, the science begins, like all of us, with small stuff. To make a clone, take a cell from an existing sheep, for example, and nurture it in a lab dish, like a young plant. Remove its nucleus, the tiny cell innards containing the DNA blueprints for making proteins, the building blocks of life. Transfer the nucleus into an egg whose own nucleus has been removed. Then implant the egg in a surrogate mother animal.

Before Dolly, the cells to be copied had to come from embryos. After cells mature and take on specific roles in the body—this cell makes heart muscle, that one becomes part of an eyelid—they lose their power to provide plans for an entirely new organism.

What's new about Dolly is that she sprang from an adult sheep, and A.D.—after Dolly—the field began to look a lot more interesting and potentially lucrative. Wilmut's achievement was tricking the 6-year-old mammary tissue into unlocking the blueprints, sealed in the mother's cells, for building a whole woolly copy. Later, another researcher, Dr. Neal First of the University of Wisconsin, said a patent has been filed for his technique for cloning cattle from adult cells, and he's "very close" to reporting whether any of his animals are pregnant. The race to clone from adult animals is no stampede yet, but another group of Wisconsin scientists at a firm called ABS Global announced last summer that more than 10 company cows were pregnant with clones, some from cells taken from adult cattle. This small flurry of announcements does seem to open Pandora's box, potentially permitting us to clone superheroes like Michael Jordan after they've proved themselves in adulthood. Many asked: Why couldn't we churn out entire basketball leagues full of Chicago Bulls?

Through a spokesperson, Jordan declines comment. But scientists say the Jordan clone scenario is bull. Just look at Wilmut's failure rate: 276 out of 277. The cloning flops were just lumps of tissue. Internal review boards of hospitals would be unlikely to approve procedures so likely to lead to such deformities. Because of that, despite the wild talk and thought about cloning, there are no cloned people yet, and there are no mainstream labs or projects with the cloning of humans as an avowed goal. Even if a researcher someday assures a perfect success rate, the resulting humans couldn't be guaranteed to be like the original. Upbringing, social factors and even a particular womb's environment all influence human growth and personality.

"You could clone 200 Hitlers, and most of them would be solid citizens," says Dr. Doris Zallen, professor of science and technology studies and humanities at Virginia Tech in Blacks-

DOUBLE TROUBLE
President Clinton last summer urged Congress to bar using the techniques used to create Dolly to clone humans.



THE NEW EWIE
Dolly, the world's first clone of an adult animal, was developed by a team of scientists at the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, Scotland.

burg. "We're more than our genes, so even if the cloning worked perfectly, it wouldn't yield a personal double."

Cloning supporters argue that such scenarios have blinded us to its bright potential. Opponents say that even realistic scenarios are frightening enough. Like sheep shears, the arguments slice both ways. Many scientists support research while opposing human cloning. Here's the cutting edge of the debate.

For cloning: Cloning techniques, short of producing human copies, could help fight some of the most lethal human illnesses and injuries. Given the promise of new cures, experimenting with the codes of life is ethical, propo-



nents say, particularly when no humans are harmed. Some experts reason that if these experiments are ethical, there's nothing necessarily wrong with making duplicates of ourselves for the sake of our health and happiness.

After all, gene research, the back-drop of cloning, has already given us tools to test for inherited disorders like cystic fibrosis and Huntington's disease. Both result from defects in a single gene. Inheritance also appears to play some role in breast cancer and Alzheimer's disease, says Zallen, author of *Does It Run in the Family, A Consumer's Guide to DNA Testing for Genetic Disorders* (Rutgers University Press, 1997). And there are tests for both, somewhat inconclusive since causes are complex. Gene therapy, fixing the defects early in life, is still a science in its infancy. "It hasn't saved



AT OUR FINGERTIPS
Genetic research, short of producing human clones, might help fight some of the most lethal human illnesses and injuries.

very many lives," Zallen says, "but it may become the major medical invention of the 21st century."

A Scottish company, PPL Therapeutics, which backed Wilmut's research, says it's making progress in tricking sheep's bodies into producing human proteins. First predicts the technology will lead to disease-fighting "nutraceuticals," medicines produced in the milk of farm animals.

Cloning work also could pay off with new medicines to fight cancer, even reverse blindness or paralysis. Cancer begins when "a mature cell suddenly decides it's on its own and begins to grow again," Tendler says. Wilmut's cloning procedure leads to a similar outcome. He starts with a mature cell and makes it act young, ready for new growth. The difference is that

the growth in a cancer patient becomes a tumor, while in Wilmut's lab it became a lamb. But the answer to the cancer riddle lies in understanding how cells are turned on or off,

Tendler says. In the future, cancer might be treated by reprogramming cells similar to the way Wilmut engineered Dolly. Doctors would conquer cancer not by radiation or chemotherapy, Tendler says, but "by hitting the cell over the head and saying, 'Hey, you're a mature cell now. Behave like a mature individual.'"

Cloning work also holds promise for paralyzed or blind victims of accidents. Damaged human nerves never recover. But fish can repair these nerves, says Dr. Suzanne Giordano, assistant professor of biogenetic engineering at Cedar Crest College in Al-

ILLUSTRATION BY ABE MANCART

Altered States

lentown, Pennsylvania. "It's amazing," she says. "A fish will be blind, and then two months later can see. Everything grows back exactly and makes the right connections."

For seven years, she's been after the secret. Cloning is essential to the work. She and her students remove the tiny gray brains of tropical zebra fish and extract their DNA. Then they clone it—run it through the lab equivalent of a copying machine—to get enough genetic material so they can dissect it at the molecular level. The work is the first step in identifying the codes for repairing nerves. Once the genes are found, she'll work on building the self-repair feature into human cells.

What if that meant building it in at birth, along with higher intelligence, long legs and great abs? Moving from fish work to the hard terrain of human experimentation leaves many scientists less comfortable. But some argue that cloning isn't essentially different from methods of reproduction society has long approved. Critics cried "Adultery!" when artificial insemination first brought offspring to infertile couples in the 1940s. Despite some continuing reservations, this country has recognized the freedom to use any reproductive means, even several stages removed from the birds and bees. "If cloning is essential to a couple's reproduction, it should be similarly treated" unless tangible harm to others is likely, according to John Robertson, a professor at the University of Texas Law School in Austin. Says Robertson:

"If they lack egg or sperm, it would be preferable perhaps to use their own DNA, rather than go to the commercial market for a stranger's gametes," the male or female cells capable of fertilization. Existing laws would ensure that the resulting clone would grow up like any other American. "There has to be much, much, much more research before we can try it with humans," Robertson says. "But if we can eventually clone a human, parents will still have all the burdens and responsibilities of having any child."

Actually, maybe not quite so many burdens. The child could be fine-tuned by the fact that parents would choose a particular set of genes instead of the genetic scramble—some from him, some from her—of traditional procreation. Robertson told the president's commis-

sion that couples "could choose more precisely the genome [set of genes] of offspring," he says, "assuring... that the resulting child has a good genetic start in life and the couple a happy rearing experience."

Robertson also says that it might be a good idea to clone and store spare embryos. He argues that the extras would provide "a backup supply of tissue or organs or a replacement child if a tragedy befalls the first."

The case against cloning. Such "clean-gene" ideas smack of eugenics, improving the human line through sometimes deadly programs designed to purify the race. Hitler's Holocaust was the most frightening of such attempts. But the United States witnessed a eugenics movement of its own in the 1920s and '30s, Zallen says.

"The idea was that socially unacceptable behavior had a genetic basis," she says, "and if you could keep certain people from reproducing, mostly immigrants, you could get rid of a social problem." So some 60,000 people were sterilized against their will. Robertson's scenario is not ethnic cleansing. But humanity's failures in deciding on a genetic gold standard suggest caution in trying to burnish our kids' genes.

Wilmut himself opposes cloning human children. "Each child should be treated as an individual," he told a Washington, D.C., meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science last summer, "and if you have set out deliberately to produce a copy, you're not going to be in a position to treat that child as an individual. It's not. It's a copy."

Even more complicated, it would be a copy with a will of its own. Suppose, for example, someone created a genetic copy of a kidney patient so that one of the clone's kidneys could be used as a spare part, without fear of rejection. "And suppose when the time comes to take the tissue, the child says 'No,'" says Dr. Jonathan VanBlerkom, a pioneer in test-tube conception and a professor at the University of Colorado in Boulder. "Does that child have any legal rights? Of course he does."

It's far more likely, VanBlerkom says, that the "spare-parts kids" won't even be born. Younger cells are less likely to be rejected when transferred into another body. So it's unlikely that patients looking for the perfect tissue donor would want the cloned embryo to become a child. "Instead, you'll start the pregnancy and then abort it after 15

to 20 weeks," he says. The whole process including the abortion to harvest the cells would cost at least \$40,000, he estimates, and it would be an ethical nightmare more complicated than abortions for other reasons.

Research and experimentation on the unborn have long stirred opposition among religious leaders. Some of them, too, oppose cloning humans, according to Dr. Courtney Campbell, an ethicist at Oregon State University in Corvallis, who provided research to the president's cloning commission. Most western religions hold that humans are made in the image of God. "So the question is: Are clones, made in the image of men or women, bypassing or at least undermining the notion of humans in the image of God?" The answer from theologians is yes and no.

"Conservatives say that children have a right to be born through natural methods of procreation, and any alternatives are an offense against human dignity," says Campbell. "A more liberal interpretation is that humans are called to do what God does, that is to participate in acts of creativity. Pursuing cloning research is one way we can express creativity and reflect the image of God."

Campbell himself favors more cloning research. "But when it comes to taking the next step and making human clones of myself, my daughter, Einstein or Michael Jordan, then I say stop." Even without invoking God, he says, cloning whole people "would lead to a loss of diversity that makes us part of a larger human community."

It might never come to that. Based on recommendations from his commission, President Clinton last summer called on Congress to bar "any attempt to create a human being." He said he agreed with his commission that it was "morally unacceptable" for anyone to attempt to clone a child, although he favored continuing research. His bill would ban human cloning for five years, when a commission would again review the issue.

Laws or no laws, sometime in the next century, technology will allow us to clone ourselves. Some of us will face the hard ethical questions. Tendler argues that when the fiction becomes reality, not many will want to clone.

"Look in the mirror, and tell me whether you want two of yourself," he suggests. The birth of Dolly has challenged us to face the looking glass and ask: *Whose image is that?* □

IN TRAGEDY'S WAKE



AFTERMATH
FEMA Director James Lee Witt (center) tours downtown Grand Forks, North Dakota, with City Engineer Ken Lein last May after floodwaters receded.

By Julie A. Rhoad

FEMA arrives on the scene after natural disasters. How well it does its job is arguable.

IN late April, the Red River sent its waters surging into vast areas of North Dakota and neighboring Minnesota, turning once-thriving communities into seas of despair. Nearly 60,000 men, women and children were forced to flee their flooded homes.

Eighty days after disaster relief was requested to assist these areas, members of Congress bickered about a \$5.5 billion disaster-aid bill to help the flood-ravaged Midwest. The squabbling stemmed from unrelated items attached to the bill that had nothing to do with disaster relief. One provision barred a government shutdown, and another blocked the Census Bureau's use of sampling techniques.

A similar situation happened with the 1994 Earthquake Relief bill. According to a Citizens Against Government Waste report, by the time the \$11 billion relief measure passed, it included \$122 million for cooperative space ventures, \$1.3 million for two sugar mill communities in Hawaii, and \$10

million to convert a New York post office into a train station.

Congress' June impasse over disaster assistance added to residents' mounting frustration toward another government agency empowered to coordinate the flood-relief effort: the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

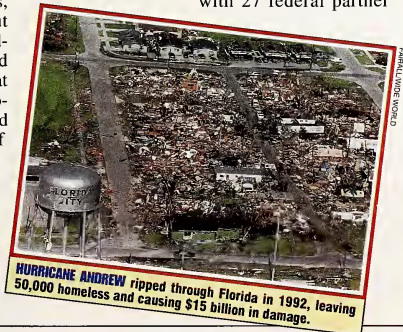
"A lot of people are honked off at the entire relief process," says Eugene Arneson, flood assistance coordinator for The American Legion Department of Minnesota. "They don't have homes to go back to, and they feel like they are not getting help from the government. People are uneasy and feel FEMA is not doing a good job."

FEMA was founded in 1979 to provide assistance to communities when disaster strikes. In theory, it is the agency that is supposed to step in and make it all better.

Here is how FEMA operates:

When a natural disaster strikes, such as a hurricane, flood, earthquake or tornado, emergency response generally is hierarchical. FEMA will not step in and help until local and state resources have been exhausted. Once a state determines it is unable to adequately assist residents

with the devastation, a major disaster declaration, based on the area's damage assessment, is requested by the respective state's governor. FEMA evaluates the request and recommends action to the White House based on the state's ability to recover. If the president determines the state requires supplemental aid, he approves the request. Only then will FEMA step in and coordinate a federal response plan, working with 27 federal partner

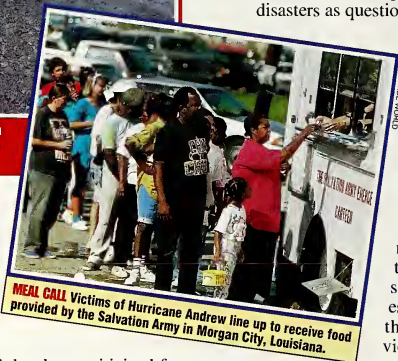


HURRICANE ANDREW ripped through Florida in 1992, leaving 50,000 homeless and causing \$15 billion in damage.

IN TRAGEDY'S WAKE



DAMAGE ASSESSMENT A FEMA inspector examines damage in Bedington, West Virginia, from flooding along the Potomac River in 1996.



REAL CALL Victims of Hurricane Andrew line up to receive food provided by the Salvation Army in Morgan City, Louisiana.

organizations and the American Red Cross to provide temporary shelter, food, medical supplies, search and recovery operations and transportation assistance.

But in reality, FEMA has been criticized for its inability to reliably carry out these functions.

A 1990 report issued by The American Legion painted a disturbing portrait of FEMA. Following South Carolina's Hurricane Hugo disaster, the Legion's National Security Commission and Defense Civil Preparedness Committee developed a FEMA study group that visited portions of hurricane-ravaged South Carolina, where 24 of 46 counties were declared disaster areas.

What the study group found, says Defense Civil Preparedness Committee chairman Frank D'Amico of New York, was a FEMA slow to respond to the devastation.

"Our study suggested that FEMA needs to be more proactive rather than reactive," explains D'Amico. "The biggest complaints we heard from disaster victims are that the application process for assistance was a monumental nightmare, and FEMA appeared to be undermanned from the onset."

The American Legion recommended ways FEMA might improve its disaster-relief efforts, including streamlining procedures to expedite assistance to victims, expanding the military

role in disaster assistance and more extensive planning, coordination and training by FEMA in conjunction with state and local governments.

Says D'Amico, "People expect their federal government to move faster and in a more efficient manner."

A more comprehensive study conducted by the General Accounting Office reached similar conclusions. In 1992, Congress empowered the GAO to evaluate FEMA's performance in responding to Hurricane Andrew, which leveled most of South Florida, and Hurricane Iniki, which destroyed much of the Hawaiian Island of Kauai. The study, released in July of 1993, rated FEMA's capability to respond to disasters as questionable.

In brief, the report says: "The federal strategy for responding to catastrophic disasters is deficient because it lacks provisions for the federal government to immediately assess the damage and corresponding needs of disaster victims and provide food, shelter and other essential services when the needs of disaster victims outstrip the resources of the state, local and private voluntary

community. Moreover, the federal strategy does not promote adequate preparedness when there is advance warning of a disaster."

Dave Cropper agrees with this assessment. After the Ohio River Valley flooding, he served two months as a field investigator for The American Legion. He says he was unhappy with FEMA's operation because "they seemed slow to respond to the needs of victims."

Cropper says even more troubling was the type of assistance FEMA offered. "Here were people asking for help," he says, "and FEMA wanted to help by giving them loans and asking them to pay it back. Many of these people are retired veterans on a fixed income. They can't afford to pay it back."

Society envisions FEMA as an organization of knights who ride in on white horses and save the day. Translation: People think FEMA will pay for all emergency needs as well as permanent restoration. But FEMA's Carl Suchocki

Please turn to page 79

Julie A. Rhoad interviewed Walter Cronkite for the September issue.

Getting aid from FEMA can be a monumental nightmare for victims.

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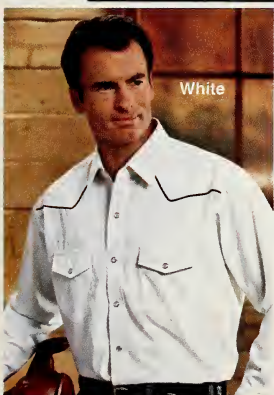
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Taking Care of OUR OWN

By Carin Chappelow

LAST February five feet of floodwater swirled through the rooms of Jim and Lois Shadle's home in Cataldo, Idaho. Today, the only signs of the crisis are new, lighter paneling and the lack of decorative molding. In the re-graded yard, the absence of flowers and shrubs indicates the surge of a fathom and a half of water.

That melancholy day, Shadle, a member of Post 99, and his wife could only watch as the Ceour d'Leue River overflowed and damaged beyond repair the majority of their belongings. Friends, family and their local Legion pitched in to help the Shadles, but when it wasn't enough, a friend suggested The American Legion National Emergency Fund (NEF).

"We didn't realize that we were eligible for a grant for quite a while. We were overjoyed when it came in," says Lois. "We might be in debt longer than we will be alive, but we are in pretty good shape, partly because The American Legion was there for us when we really needed it."

The National Emergency Fund, born of a similar disaster, was established in 1969, the year Hurricane

Carin Chappelow, a summer editorial intern for this magazine, attends DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, where she majors in communications and French.

When Mother Nature strikes Legion family members, the National Emergency Fund helps them back on their feet.



Camille ravaged the southeastern coast, and reaffirmed in 1989, the year an earthquake rocked San Francisco and Hurricane Hugo slammed into the Carolinas.

The Shadles are not alone in turning to the NEF. With the seemingly never-ending assortment of floods, earthquakes, hurricanes and other natural disasters, the National Emergency Fund drained rapidly during the summer as requests for assistance poured in to The American Legion National Headquarters. As of mid-July, the NEF had paid 1,277 grants, totaling



SEA OF GRIEF
Many Legion family members residing in the Grand Forks, North Dakota, area have received cash aid through the NEF.

\$1,379,150. In all of 1996 the NEF gave 225 grants, totaling \$273,950.

"The NEF offers immediate and direct aid based on need to any member of The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion," says Herman G. Harrington, chairman of the National Internal Affairs Commission, which oversees the NEF. "The fund relies on the concept of veterans helping veterans; it is not a category in the Legion budget. Each donated dollar aids a Legion family member because no administrative costs are deducted."

A recent case of veterans helping veterans in the face of disaster can be found at Post 191 in Mount Airy, Maryland. The Post members took it upon themselves to raise money for Legionnaires who were victims of the Red River flooding in North Dakota.

While Legionnaires in North Dakota were beginning to piece their saturated lives back together, in Maryland



GETTING STARTED Legionnaire John Stiles (left) explains to Doug Pladson of East Grand Forks, Minnesota, how NEF grants are processed.

MINNESOTA District Cmdr. Joe Baker (right) and Sheriff Tom Matejka discuss flood damages in the town of Breckenridge.

NEF is on the scene providing aid and comfort to the veteran community when it's needed.

members of Post 191 held extra bingo nights, and all proceeds benefitted the North Dakota American Legion. The Post also accepted donations from Post and Auxiliary members. Its goal of \$1,000 was dwarfed by the achievement. Post 191 raised almost \$5,500 for the flood victims of North Dakota.

The idea came from the bingo and kitchen workers of the Post. "Frankly, we were taken aback by the generosity of our Legionnaires, Auxiliary members and others here," says William M. Holley, Post Commander. According to Department Adjutant David M. Schmidt of North Dakota, the donation from Maryland was the most generous.

When Mother Nature knocks angrily, American Legion NEF volunteers are soon on the scene with grant applications in hand. Applications also are

available at local Posts and Departments. Once filled out, the form goes to the Department for recommendation and on to National Headquarters for approval where, usually, 48 working hours suffice to process the grant.

Applications for NEF assistance are rarely turned down, says Wayne Vanover, assistant director of Internal Affairs and Membership, which is why continuing donations are vitally important to the fund. Vanover oversees all grant applications that come into National Headquarters from Departments.

When a NEF check is delivered to a veteran, family or Post, the recipients do not have to worry about repayment. The money is not a loan, and there are no strings attached.

Paul and Judy Smart of Grand
Please turn to page 64

MERCIFUL MEDICINE

The highest calling in medicine is to do more than just ease the suffering of the terminally ill. Even if it means pulling the plug, says this physician.

PATRICIA Diane Trumbull's life was no longer marked by years or even months. She was measuring her life in days. Earlier, she declined chemotherapy or even hospice care; the odds of winning this battle were just too slim to risk the sickening effects of aggressive treatment. She listened to other doctors' opinions but decided to go home and spend as much time with her family as possible. She now faced spending those last days in a sedated stupor, masking her pain and ending in certain death.

Her doctor knew what her next step would be. They had discussed it on numerous occasions during her illness. Still, that did not make the wait any easier. He wanted to be there as she took the lethal dose of sleeping pills that he had provided her three months earlier. Standing by her bedside, he could at least arrest any problems that might have arisen. Both patient and doctor knew, though, anyone assisting her death could be charged with second-degree manslaughter.

Assistant Editor Layne Cameron interviewed Dr. Timothy Quill and also wrote the profile of Dr. Jack Kevorkian, which appears on the next page.



JOHN E. BRONKH

Death Becomes Him

AS the U.S. Supreme Court side-stepped the assisted suicide debate by throwing the ball back to the states' courts, one man was making his stance quite clear.

On the same June day the Supreme Court ruled that American citizens have no constitutional right to assisted suicide, Dr. Jack Kevorkian apparently struck again—a young woman was found dead in a Michigan motel, next to a note instructing authorities to call the doctor's attorney. "I know who's not afraid and who isn't intimidated, and that would be Dr. Kevorkian, who stands up for his patients," Kevorkian's lawyer Geoffrey Fieger coyly told The Associated Press.

The lawyer's statement suggests that Kevorkian was thumbing his nose at the powers that be—a perverse editorial comment on the court's ruling.

This uncanny timing would hardly have been out of character for the man who has come to be known as "Dr. Death." His quirky outspokenness and passion for publicity have solidified his role as poster boy for the right-to-die movement and as a lightning rod for the hopes and fears of those on both sides of the issue.

He has been arrested, brought to trial and had his license suspended, but has yet to be successfully prosecuted—effectively allowing him to continue his work. In each of Kevorkian's three trials, juries have been swayed by tales of the suicide victim's suffering as well as by the documented consent of the patient.

It was on June 4, 1990, that Jack Kevorkian made headlines by presiding over his first assisted suicide. The vision of Janet



Dr. Jack Kevorkian's waiting room is rarely full, but a few "patients" still seek his controversial treatment.

Adkins lying on crisp white sheets that day in the back of Kevorkian's rusty '68 Volkswagen van formed the medical thunderhead of a stormy debate that rages as fervently as *Roe v. Wade*.

SINCE then, Kevorkian has continued to ply his macabre trade, "being present" at the deaths of at least 45 patients.

Through it all, he has never backed down. Death, after all, is his life.

In a spartan apartment in Pontiac, Michigan, the emaciated doctor turned artist creates paintings titled *Genocide* and *Very Still Life*, ghoulish renderings in which twisted skulls are surrounded by broken bones.

The inspiration for such graphic depictions springs not only from Kevorkian's profession, but from personal tragedy.

The fledgling doctor lost his father to a heart attack. Soon after, his mother was diagnosed with cancer.

The disease quickly spread to her bones, and her son watched helplessly as she spent

Please turn to page 64

Trumbull swallowed the barbiturates and died on her living room couch as her family waited upstairs. Her physician, Dr. Timothy Quill, was not implicated in her death. Avoiding prosecution, however, only moved him to pursue the larger goal—legitimizing the practice of assisted suicide. By establishing a long-term relationship with the patient and by using assisted suicide as the last resort, Quill yearned to knock Dr. Jack Kevorkian's face off of the issue and impose a more rigorous approach.

The 46-year-old Quill discusses physician-assisted suicide with as calm a demeanor as one might present the common usages of antibiotics. As professor of medicine and psychiatry at the University of Rochester and associate chief of medicine at Genesee Hospital in Rochester, New York, Quill broke out of the think-tank mentality toward the issue and published his findings from Trumbull's death (identified as "Diane") in *The New England Journal of Medicine* ("Death and Dignity, A Case of Individualized Decision Making," March 7, 1991).

Quill relished the debates the article stirred but languished in the professional, public and legal fallout. His confession brought professional misconduct charges from the New York State Board of Health, as well as a subpoena to face a grand jury. Quill found that threatening letters and phone calls, as well as many hours of testimony, were formidable punishments, even though he was cleared.

Believing it foolish to be naive twice, Quill hesitated when approached to sign on as the lead plaintiff to shepherd the assisted suicide case through the state, appellate and U.S. Supreme Court. But the deciding factor was his commitment to his professional mission statement: "We cannot ignore those few, very troubling dying patients whose lives become intolerable despite extensive caring efforts by physicians, nurses and families. Such persons sometimes reach a point at which continued suffering becomes a bigger enemy than death. Helping persons to die with dignity is one of our highest callings as a profession and as a society."

The Supreme Court's unanimous decision to uphold states' bans on assisted suicide was hardly a door-closing verdict. In future rulings, state bans may be disavowed based on individual cases of unbelievable agony. Little has changed. Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist said, "Our holding permits this debate to continue—as it should in a democratic society."

AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE: Why did you voluntarily write about your case in *The New England Journal of Medicine*?

DR. TIMOTHY QUILL: In my view, the conversation about doctors helping their patients die was superficial and abstract. These issues are easy on the abstract level. They're much more difficult at the level of real patients, real doctors and their families. The only cases available prior to my writing in the medical journal was literature on Dr. Kevorkian, who is easy to dismiss from a clinical and ethical point of view, and a case called "It's Over, Debbie," which appeared in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* in which a medical resident gives a large dose of morphine to someone he didn't really know that well. Once I thought

about writing, I decided it would be beneficial to generate good discussion in the medical sphere.

Q. What personal and professional challenges did you face with that first case?

A. There were several challenging aspects of Diane's case. One was that she chose not to have treatment for her leukemia, which had a small but significant chance of working. That was a challenging discussion with her family. At my behest, she sought several other doctors to try to make sure she was making the best decision.

The challenge then becomes hospice care. So I presented hospice care very enthusiastically. She was eager to go into a hospice program because she wanted to spend as much time as possible with her family. But she also wanted some reassurance that if hospice care started to fail, and if she started having very high pain that could only be controlled by sedation or if she started to develop overwhelming symptoms, then she could skip that last sedated phase or bad phase—which she had seen in other patients. I understood her desire to do that.

Then she raised the question, would I help her to die in that circumstance? I had helped people to die indirectly many times; stopping life support or giving high doses of pain medicine. I had to do some soul searching, and I asked her to do the same. I met many times with her family and I talked to many of my colleagues, my family, my wife and to others who had provided this sort of assistance before. They're not that hard to find. After thinking about the decision and talking with her several times, I made peace with it. From the moment she had that prescription she lived three months. She lived those last months with the assurance that if her life became very harsh at the end, she could have an [out]. It freed her from fear.

She took life-prolonging therapy, yet people have written about her saying that she wanted to die. That is complete poppycock. She didn't want to die; she wanted to live as long as her life was meaningful. She only took her life when her suffering became extreme—when her life was measured by days. So to me, the hardest part was the early decision.

Q. Kevorkian has charged that you are a coward and a fraud for not being present at your patient's death. How do you respond to that?

A. Diane chose to be alone at her death. She did so because she read the law in New York state, and she would have not chosen to be alone had the law been different [anyone attending her suicide might have been charged with second-degree manslaughter]. And I think that is a real problem.

Was I a coward? I suppose in a certain way. I have no desire to lose my license or to be a martyr. I'm trying to get people to think about what's out there. Had she asked me to be there, I would have really had to think hard about whether that would have changed things. I do think if you had an open process, doctors should be present if that's what the patient wants. If they don't want the doctor, they should at least be available in case problems arise.

Q. Had the laws been different, would you have been there?

A. Had she asked me to be there, absolutely. I would have been there.

Q. Did your work as director of a hospice affect your views on assisted suicide?

A. I firmly believe that hospice care is the standard of care for people who are dying. It is what every physician should know how to do—good pain relief, developing social supports for families. If we are to consider physician-assisted dying, it should be only after hospice care has failed. It should be for those rare cases where in spite of all efforts to take a patient out of pain, they're still suffering in extreme ways. It's when good care fails; it's not an alternative.

Q. All sides of this debate use the phrase, "dying with dignity." How would you define the phrase?

A. I would say that is when someone is dying with one's sense of personal integrity intact. It means dying relatively free of pain; at least pain or symptoms that are overwhelming. It doesn't mean that it is completely stress free or symptom free, but it means it's free of the extremes.

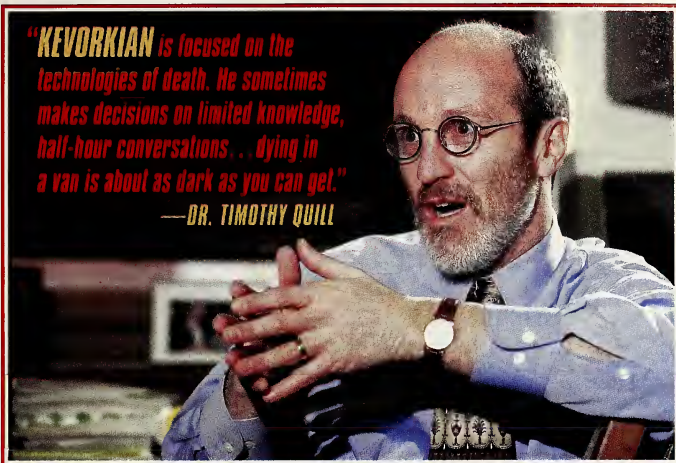
Q. How do you feel your statement conflicts with the Hippocratic Oath?

A. I don't feel it conflicts with it at all. There are two main pieces to the Hippocratic Oath: One is the mandate to prolong life and protect the sanctity of life, and the other is to relieve human suffering. Early on in a person's illness, we often ask them to endure considerable suffering in the interest of prolonging their life. Does that violate the Hippocratic Oath? I don't think anyone will say that it does because your purpose then is prolonging life and putting someone through intensive chemotherapy, putting someone through an intensive care unit are very hard processes. You are doing it for a higher purpose.

At the end of life, your primary mandate becomes relieving human suffering. And sometimes you will use methods that indirectly shorten a person's life. This has liberated us to give large doses of pain medicine. Again, rarely do these doses end a person's life; they might even prolong it because it reduces stress, but we accept that risk. I think when suffering is extreme at the very end, we may even take measures that end life. We allow that. We allow patients to be removed from life support systems. We do it because it's a person's life, and their suffering becomes most important to us.

Q. Forty-four states ban the prescription of lethal doses of drugs with the laws being unclear in the remain-

"KEVORKIAN is focused on the technologies of death. He sometimes makes decisions on limited knowledge, half-hour conversations. . . dying in a van is about as dark as you can get."
—DR. TIMOTHY QUILL



ing six. How long has this been in practice, and how does this differentiate from physician-assisted death?

A. The laws are in place, but they were not designed with this in mind. They were designed to prevent villainous people, family members, looking for the family fortune. But these laws are in place, no one has really been convicted, and as a result rarely is anyone prosecuted. So they are on the books, people are not prosecuted and people will look the other way as long as you don't talk about it. They keep the process very much underground. We're getting more and more data about the extent of the underground practice. It is a hard thing to study because if you talk about it, theoretically you are vulnerable to prosecution.

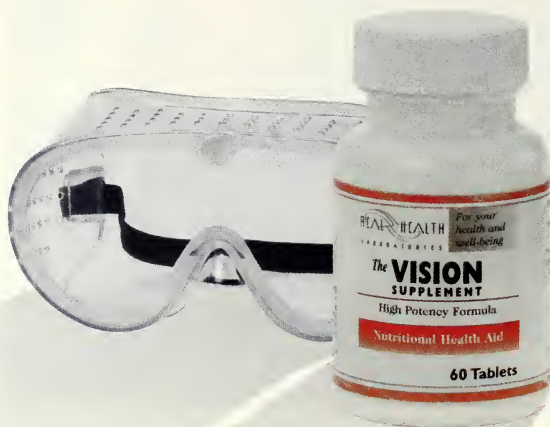
It's only legal if you don't talk about it. If you prescribe potentially lethal medicine, and if you have sort of a fake conversation like "Don't take too much of this because it may kill you," with a wink and a nod, that's probably OK. But if you have an explicit conversation about how much of this is lethal and that I don't want you to take it, but if you feel that you have no other choice, it would work in that way. If you have a back and forth conversation like that, that's more dangerous from a legal perspective. And that's a disaster from a clinical view.

Q. How does your stance differ from Kevorkian, and why do you feel the need to distance yourself from him?

A. I think I couldn't be more different. I take care of people all across the life cycle. The majority of these people want to live as long as they possibly can—even those who are dying are still fighting for life.

I am committed to people throughout the life cycle, including the dying process. It's a long-term commitment to individuals. Kevorkian doesn't do medicine. He is involved in the moment of death—that is a tiny, tiny piece of this continuum. To make good decisions at the moment of death,

Please turn to page 66



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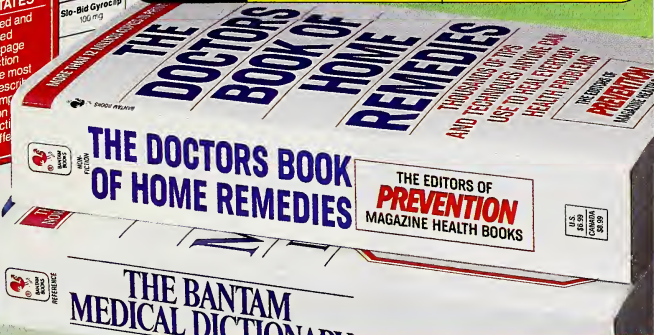
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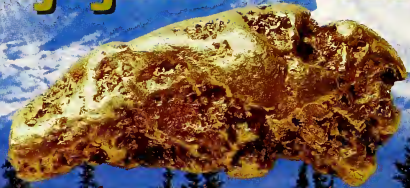
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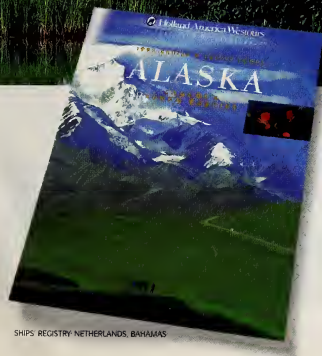
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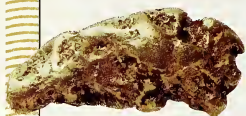
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ALASKA



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By George C. DevoI

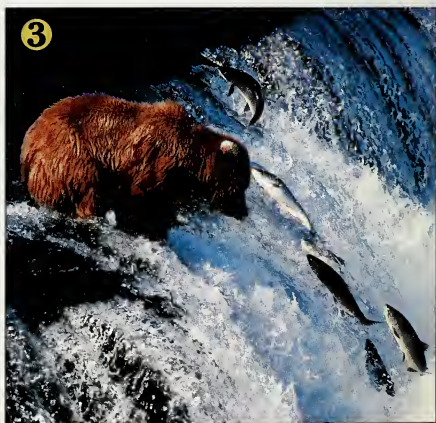
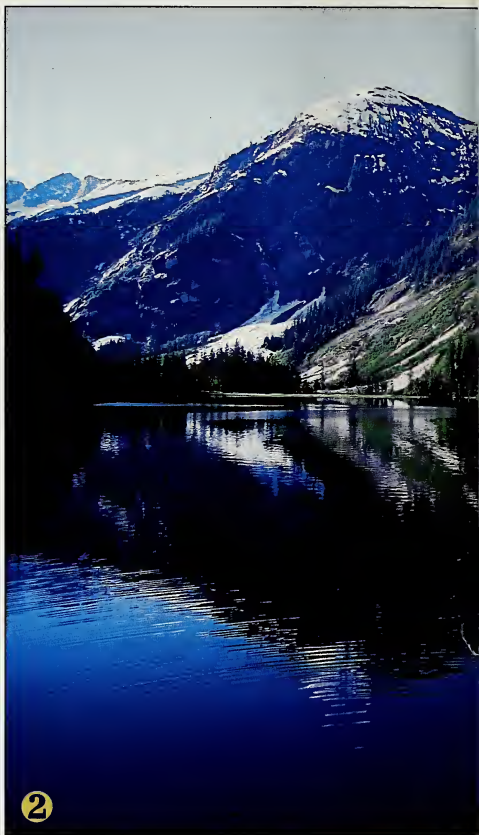
PIONEER. Few of us today meet the rugged criteria of that word—the criteria our forefathers met when they left the comfort of familiar surroundings to embark on a new life in uncharted lands. Not only are we less inclined to venture into areas unknown, but there are far fewer places untouched by modern civilization.

Still, the fantasy tugs at us. Though we might not climb

George C. DevoI is publisher and editor-in-chief of Ocean & Cruise News. He has made several trips to Alaska aboard cruise liners.

aboard a covered wagon like the pioneers of yore, many of us dream of the challenging life and adventurous times of the hardy souls who risked it all for a long-shot fortune. We dream, for example, of the sourdoughs whose quest for wealth took them north to the cold—and gold—of Alaska....

Often called the "Last Frontier," today's majestically beautiful Alaska offers visitors the chance to recapture the spirit of a pioneering people, to touch the lives and history of those who answered the call of the wild—but in somewhat more comfortable surroundings. And in 1998, the spirit of Alaska reaches fever pitch with its centennial celebration of the Klondike Gold Rush.





T. BRANTON/ALASKA



1. GOLD PORT A cruise ship docks at Juneau in the spring.

2. LAST FRONTIER The untouched splendor of Walker Cove beckons tourists.

3. GONE FISHING Wildlife abounds at Brook Falls.

4. RUSH This miner was among thousands who flocked to Alaska when gold was discovered.

5. SHIP SHAPE The *Nieuw Amsterdam* sails into Ketchikan.

6. PROSPECTORS A "sourdough" miner shows visitors how to pan for gold.

COOPER/STILLMAN

G. BRILL/CONTRASTLAND AMERICA



5

Alaska has actually drawn tourists since 1867, when its 591,000 square miles (that's one-third the size of all 48 contiguous states) were purchased from Russia for \$7.2 million, a sum that today buys a nice one-acre estate in Bel Air. The Isabel Miller Museum in Sitka records that tourists came to Sitka aboard steamships in 1869. And they're still coming, thousands of them a week, especially from early May through September.

Because of Alaska's sheer vastness, it's impossible to see it all in one visit, and difficult enough in one lifetime. But a cruise can provide a good head start in exploring Ameri-

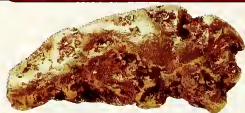
ca's largest and perhaps most exhilarating state.

An Alaskan cruise could cover the main coastal areas, including Ketchikan, Sitka and Juneau—all of which can be reached only by air or boat—and the spectacular beauty of Glacier Bay National Park, with its wide variety of vegetation and wildlife. Those lucky enough to have the time can get a good sampling of both attractions by taking one of the many cruise-and-four combination packages offered by such firms as Holland America Line-Westours, Princess Cruises & Tours, and Alaska Sightseeing/Cruise West—all of which could be considered pioneers in their own right among

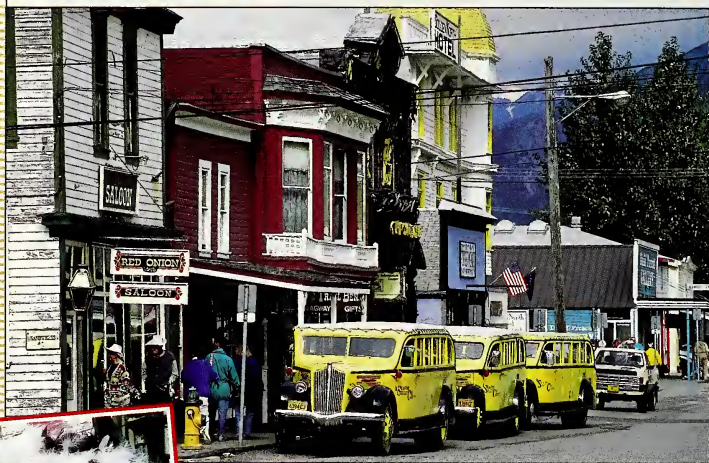


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ALASKA



© JAMES EMMETT STOKES

wasn't until the steamer *Portland* arrived in Seattle in 1897 with 68 men and their "stocks of gold" that fortune-seekers flocked to the new frontier, steaming into Skagway with dreams of untold riches.

Most of those who followed in their footsteps would leave Alaska empty-handed. Not so today's visitors. Skagway, in fact, has gone on to become a major launching point for Alaskan travel. The town has survived pretty much intact, with many of its historic buildings wards of the National Park System.

Those who visit Skagway solely by cruise ship likely will see a town bustling with people from other cruise ships. Even then, the population is far less than the 20,000 who once crowded in. But stay overnight, on a combination cruise-and-land tour, and you'll see a far different town after the ships leave. Early in the evening the streets will be nearly empty, with the only sign of life one of the local bars—such as the Red Onion Saloon—that have survived from Skagway's gold-rush days.

Among the first to promote Skagway ("Nothing Like It in the World") was Martin Itjen, who became the town's first sightseeing guide and operated the Skagway Street Car Co. Itjen conveyed tourists to all the spots made famous during the Klondike gold rush. The company continues nowadays under local historian Steve

FRONTIER LIFE
Many of the attractions in Skagway recapture the spirit of long-ago days. A favorite spot for many is the Red Onion Saloon.

sional 90-degree day. So much for images of the so-called "Frozen North!"

One of the special bonuses of an Alaskan trip is the much longer day available to enjoy it all. Daylight in south-central Alaska, near Anchorage, lasts more than 19 hours in mid-June. Still farther north, at Fairbanks, the day is even longer. An additional fringe benefit is the opportunity

to breathe truly fresh air. There are no heavy industries in Alaska and far too few automobiles to create the haze that wreathes so many cities.

GOING FOR THE GOLD

Californian George Carmack and his two colorfully named Indian friends, Skookum Jim and Tagish Charlie, touched off the rush to the Yukon when they discovered gold at Bonanza Creek in August 1896. Word soon reached the lower 48, but it

Alaska vacation companies.

The Eskimos and tundra that come readily to mind when we think of Alaska fall far short of encompassing the state's variety. Summer in southeast Alaska usually features temperatures in the 60s, but often, when the sun is blazing, the mercury can reach the 70s or 80s. Tourists should expect some rain—though likely more of a drizzle. In Ketchikan, some locals like to claim it rains 360 days a year, but the typical visitor is apt to have more 70-degree sunny days than rainy ones.

Away from the water or over the coastal mountain range, Alaska becomes more arid and displays abundant sunshine. Summer temperatures can reach the 80s, and there will even be the occa-

sional 90-degree day. So much for images of the so-called "Frozen North!"

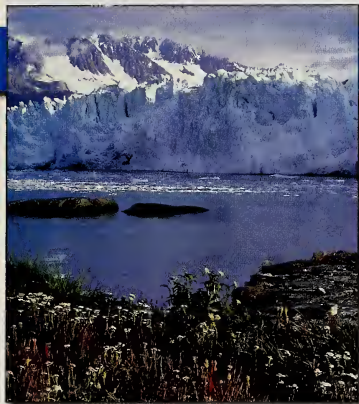


ICE CAPADES
The Spirit of '98 sails through a narrow waterway to nose up to a blue iceberg at LaConte Fjord.

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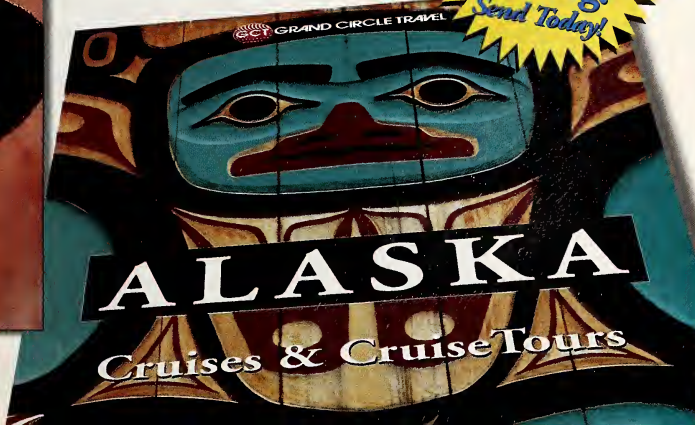


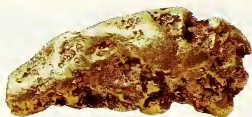
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ALASKA



SITKA
Located on Baranof Island, this area typifies the beauty of the state. Sitka is best known for its Russian heritage, and it was here where the Alaskan territory was transferred to the U.S.

COOL SAILING
The cruise ship *Noordam* in Glacier Bay.



Hiles and transports visitors in vintage motorcoaches with costumed conductors to the spots Itjen showed vacationers in 1923.

One don't-miss experience is the 40-mile round-trip ride on the White Pass & Yukon Railway from Skagway to the summit of White Pass. A marvelous feat of engineering, the railroad was begun in May 1898 and attained the summit on Feb. 18, 1899, eventually reaching all the way to the Yukon Territory. The climb is among the steepest in North America: from sea level to 2,865 feet in just 20 miles. Along the way, views from one of the vintage rail cars include Dead Horse Gulch (where 3,000 pack horses met their end trying to negotiate the narrow and rocky path), Brackett Road (a wagon toll road), and of course White Pass itself.

Alaska cruise-and-tour firms offer extensive programs to all major destinations in Alaska. Highlighting the "gold rush" theme in 1998, Holland America Line-Westours recently purchased Gold Dredge No. 8. Here visitors can dine on a sourdough lunch in between panning for gold. Other highlights include the exclusive cruise from Dawson City on the "River of Gold," as well as visits to a wildlife preserve for guaranteed sightings of such

exotic fauna as moose and dangerous grizzlies.

Alaska Sightseeing/Cruise West's *Spirit of '98*, a replica of an early coastal steamer, is much smaller than most of today's cruise ships but can poke into more remote spots for an up-close look at the land and wildlife. Princess Cruises & Tours also has an extensive array of Alaska cruises and inland tours.

For sheer beauty, though, nothing tops Glacier Bay National Park. Just over 200 years ago, explorer George Vancouver happened upon the ice-clogged entrance to what is now Glacier Bay. The glacier then was more than 4,000 feet thick and up to 20 miles wide, and extended more than 100 miles to the St. Elias range.

When naturalist John Muir visited the area in 1879, he found that the ice had retreated 48 miles up the bay. Today, cruise ships voyage nearly 70 miles up the bay to Grand Pacific Glacier and its neighbor, Margerie Glacier. To the delight of those on-board passing ships, Margerie often sloughs off huge chunks of deep-blue ice and sends them splashing into the crystal-clear water below.

If Glacier Bay National Park represents the isolated natural splendor of Alaska, the city of Sitka (pop. about 8,500) on Baranof Island best typifies the beauty of the more settled areas. Sitka revels in its Russian heritage as the spot where the Alaska Territory was transferred officially from Russia to the United States. The city is a prime area for sport fishing and also is the home of the Sheldon Jackson Museum, housing an extensive collection of Alaska native artifacts. As with most of the towns and cities in southeast Alaska, the only way in or out is by plane or boat, and this isolation allows Sitka to retain its charm.

Indeed, in the end, perhaps, the most marvelous thing about Alaska is that it's still relatively undiscovered—much like it was for those early pioneers. Though gold fever isn't necessarily what motivates people to visit this enchanting land anymore, a cruise ship can surely help you carry home an infinite treasure of vacation memories. □

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GOIN'
SOUTH
Ernie and
his wife,
Jerry,
arrive in
Peru to
begin a
series on
penal
colonies.

Ernie Pyle painted portraits of America and her people long before he became a legendary war correspondent.

An Extraordinary

'Little Guy'

By James E. Tobin

THE BIG news flash from the war that day, April 18, 1945: The man who traveled to the frontlines to chronicle the hopes, dreams and fears of GIs—and share their stories with the folks back home—was no more. Off the coast of Okinawa, on the tiny island of Ie Shima, a Japanese machinegunner had zeroed in on Ernie Pyle and squeezed the trigger. Battle-hardened troops had lost a dear friend.

Pyle's up-front reporting had become legendary during the war. He was often described as the quintessential "little guy"—an ordinary guy from Dana, Indiana, who could translate World War II's big picture through the

eyes of other ordinary guys.

While Pyle indeed is best known for his battlefield dispatches, the Hoosier wordsmith made his mark in journalism long before America was plunged into World War II.

Ernie Pyle and his wife, Jerry, traveled extensively throughout the United States for Scripps-Howard newspapers during the 1930s. He portrayed the pathos and happiness of ordinary human beings. America was his canvas, and Americans were his subjects when Pyle sat down at his typewriter to practice his art. It was a style that would endure until that April morning in 1945, and this excerpt from *Ernie Pyle's War* by James Tobin conveys Pyle in the pursuit of perfecting it:

"A nice little column"

Roving reporter, 1935-1939

Ernie wandered the Western Hemisphere for nearly seven years, from 1935 until early in 1942. A tramp with an expense account, he explored cities, towns and crossroads villages in forty-eight states, Alaska, Canada, Hawaii, and Central and South America. He got out of his Dodge convertible coupe to talk with thousands of people—soda jerks, millionaires, death-row inmates, movie stars, cranks, cowboys, strippers, sheepherders, strikers, bosses, promoters, sculptors, mayors, hookers, teachers, prospectors, tramps and evangelists. He wrote two and a half million words that comprise a forgotten but magnificent mosaic of the American scene in the Great Depression.

And in the process he created "Ernie Pyle."

The actual Ernie remained a bundle of contradictions and anxieties, pressured by deadlines and perpetually worried. But "Ernie Pyle" came to life as a figure of warmth and reassurance, a sensitive, self-deprecating, self-revealing, compassionate friend who shared his sadnesses and exhilarations, his daydreams and funny stories, his ornery moods and nonsensical musings, his settled prejudices and deepest meditations. In 1935, Pyle was merely a skilled newspaperman. By 1942 he had become a consummate craftsman

Excerpted from James Tobin's Ernie Pyle's War. Copyright 1997 by James Tobin. Reprinted by permission of The Free Press, a division of Simon & Schuster Inc.

of short prose and simultaneously shaped a mythic role for himself—an American Everyman ready for war.

"The heart of the thing"

In the latter half of the 1930s, news broke in thunderclaps—Nazi and Fascist aggression; civil war in Spain; resurgent depression; great labor strikes; the political wars of the later New Deal. It was also a time of heavyweight newspaper columnists—political tub-thumpers like Heywood Broun,

charm and a cumulative power that sharply distinguished the column from dime-a-dozen human-interest features. You read Lippmann for wisdom, Pegler for controversy, Winchell for gossip, but Pyle you read for sustenance in difficult times. In Washington, a newspaper delivery man was overheard to say, "The trouble with these column guys is they want to organize the world... except Pyle. Throw the rest away, but gimme Pyle."

When readers were polled in



ON THE ROAD
Pyle tours the country before WWII. On assignment in Alaska, he gets a shave from a lady barber.

Westbrook Pegler and Hugh Johnson; the chattering scandal-mongers Walter Winchell and Drew Pearson; and, watching from above, the austere, intellectual Walter Lippmann, guiding presidents and other mortals through "Today and Tomorrow." Amid such news and among such giants Ernie Pyle seemed a pygmy. The heavyweights ran in hundreds of papers; Pyle's whimsical wanderlogue ran only in Scripps-Howard's twenty-four outlets, and inconsistently even in those. The column simply did not fit conventional definitions of news, and some editors doubted the wisdom of running a thousand words of it day in and day out. "It wasn't flashy, provocative, pontifical or in any way sensational," observed George Carlin, the United Feature executive who later took charge of selling Pyle in syndication. "Editors would all allow as how they liked it; a nice little column to have around but it wasn't 'essential.' " Gradually, editors began to see what their readers saw—a quirky



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An Extraordinary

CURLY DUO Ernie interviews Shirley Temple (left) and her stand-in.

'Little Guy'

Scripps-Howard towns, Ernie invariably stood atop the list of favorite features among young and old, hard-up and well-to-do. An editor in Denver once told him that "kids, Civil War veterans, capitalists, professional men, and WPA workers all read everything you write that they can get." Fan letters flowed in from the home-bound elderly who loved to travel in Ernie's shoes, while in Evansville, Indiana, a poll showed him to be the favorite columnist of local teenagers. In Pittsburgh the column was thought to be especially popular among college students. In El Paso an editor reported that "Ernie Pyle's name is as well known... as the police chief's," but that was nothing compared to Cleveland, where "the impression soon prevails in your mind that Ernie Pyle... is the president of the United States..."

People who read Ernie Pyle every day were treated to a study in American particulars, often celebratory but often skeptical as well. His datelines, which ranged from the great cities to the tiniest dots on the map, signified the triumph of his youthful wanderlust. He sought the exotic as well as the familiar, delighting in every return to favorite places such as New Orleans and Albuquerque. He took exuberant pride in tallying new feats of geographic mastery, as when he crossed the border of his forty-eighth state (it was Utah in the fall of 1936). He sought out geographical extremes and oddities—the Northwest Angle of Minnesota, that

odd chunk of the U.S. that juts into Ontario; the nation's southernmost place (Key West); the lowest point in the nation (Death Valley, California); "...you could go stand in it if you wanted to wade in the salt marsh. The extraordinarily gradual drop in elevation in the five hundred miles between the Rocky Mountains and Oklahoma City, the longest and gentlest slope in the world."

HE relished the richness of place names—Mexican Hat, Utah, Tamazunchale, Mexico ("The closest an American can come to saying it is 'Thomas 'n Charlie'"); and an Indiana village that went by four different names, depending on whether one consulted the road map, the rail depot, the Post Office or the residents. His senses were keenly attuned to local idiosyncrasies, pleasing or not. "I know within five minutes after driving into a town whether it's any good or not..." he wrote. "Some cities are grouchy, some are indifferent, some are stuck-up, some have a robbery complex." He was no mere booster. The Atlantic coast from New York to Portland, Maine, he said, was "one long hideous summer resort for 400 miles, with millions of unhappy-looking people running in and out of hot dog stands in their bathrobes." When Scripps-Howard's editors in Ohio pleaded to have Pyle dispatched to talk up their depressed industrial centers in hopes of spurring tourism, Ernie was privately furious at their thinly veiled attempt to entice him as "an all-around Chamber of Commerce mouthpiece for the flat dismal state of Ohio." He went, but

took his revenge with a couple of rabbit punches: "If there's anything in this world devised to give a motorist the flibbertijibbets, it's an old, worn-out, patched-up brick pavement. For some reason, Ohio is filthy with them," and: "In northern Ohio—Akron, Cleveland, Toledo—prices are so high you get indigestion eating your meal. Hotels are up too."

The column breathed the air of democracy. Other national columnists wrote down to readers from the cultural heights of New York, Washington and Hollywood, but Ernie wrote "on the level" among and about ordinary people. His trademark topics were drawn from the concrete stuff of everyday life. He resented pretense and snobbery, prized individualism and eccentricity. "G-d-d-mn all big shots," he told a friend, a sentiment that pervaded the column. He far preferred "regular" people, by which he meant people innocent of class consciousness, people "you could talk to." He suspected the mighty and embraced the low, and he believed the distance between those social extremes was much shorter than either believed. At a press conference he once appraised the spirit of the New Deal in the person and manner of Harry Hopkins, the shrewd social worker who became President Roosevelt's right-hand man:

"Mr. Hopkins, I liked you because you look like common people. I don't mean any slur by that either, because they don't come any commoner than I am, but you sit there so easy swinging back and forth in your swivel chair, in your blue suit and blue shirt, and your neck is sort of skinny, like poor people's necks, and you act honest, too."

"And you answer the reporters' questions as though you were talking to them personally instead of being a big official. It tickled me the way you would say, 'I can't answer that,' in a tone that almost says out loud, 'Now you knew damn well when you asked me that I couldn't answer that.'"

There was always a twist in his portrayal of the common man. During and after World War II, it was often said that Pyle's travels in the 1930s were about "the ordinary human being living his ordinary life," as a Scripps-Howard editor once put it. That was wrong. Ernie, following the adage that news is what departs from the norm, knew the truly ordinary was inevitably dull. It is far more accurate to say he studied unknown people doing *extraordinary*.

Please turn to page 68

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CHANCE STUDIOS

Anthony G. Jordan

OUR MAINE MAN

Elected National Commander

Tony Jordan assumes the helm as National Commander and charts a steady course for The American Legion in 1997–98.

By Robert C. Imler

IN A room paneled in slabs of glowing knotty-pine, Anthony G. Jordan takes leave of long-time friends at Bradford-Sortwell-Wright Post 54, Wiscasset, Maine. "I want to thank this Post from the bottom of my heart for what you have done. Your support, whether moral or financial, means a lot to me. With a lot of dedication, a lot of hard work, Post 54 has been behind me every step of the way."

That's *all the way* to becoming the leading candidate for National Commander, and now his anticipated election is bearing down on him like a barge of overstuffed appointment books. Jordan has a few more things to do before traveling to The American Legion National Convention in Orlando, Florida.

"I have to visit about 10 more states," he says, examining a pocket notebook. "That's where I'm at right

Managing Editor Robert C. Imler interviewed Lt. Gen. Edward Baca for the August issue.

now. Running for National Commander is a bigger job than I ever realized. This week we go to New Hampshire.... Next week we go to Oregon and then to Nebraska." He rattles off his remaining campaign tour in a tone that leaves no doubt he'll be there as scheduled.

That's Tony Jordan. Organized. Efficient. Looking at the details of a project before tackling it. "I like my desk just so at home or at the office. When I look in on an organization or office, desktops tell me a lot."

Jordan's office is in the Maine Yankee Atomic Power Plant, for years a lightning rod for environmental concerns and anti-nuclear protest. He worked for the contractor building the plant and joined the Maine Yankee management team when they took it over. One consequence of his tenure is that he's used to working with folk who have diametrically opposing views.

"I found that I'm very people-oriented, and that's helped me a lot. Something I've always tried to live by the premise that you should treat people the way you would like to be treated."

Details, big ones, little ones, all of them important ones, have been his life's labor.

That's definitely Tony Jordan, seeking the heart of the matter in rapid-fire questions, committed to making big things work smoothly, by getting every little thing right.

Jordan and Maine Yankee each recognized in the other a good fit, and the power company has given Jordan—who has served the firm for over 25 years—a leave of absence to lead The American Legion, effective on his election Sept. 4.

Jordan gained his nuclear plant experience on the job, reading the man-

uals (and later helping write them), working with the contractors and excavators, attending seminars, making time for the occasional college course, learning every widget and its specs and—much harder—how to get it federally certified.

All that followed his Army service, from 1963 to 1965. Jordan returned to Wiscasset and joined The American Legion because Wiscasset was home—and the Legion was an active group in the community. "I wanted to be on the bowling team" he recalls. "I became a Post officer and even the janitor." Jordan would learn The American Legion the same way he would learn building and certifying atomic power plants.

Post 54's building began as a typical New England church, but the congregation (Methodist, and long the host of the village library) dwindled during the



PARTNERS

Tony and his wife, Claudette, take a quiet moment near Pemaquid Point Lighthouse.

OUR MAINE MAN

first half of the century and had vanished by the end of World War II. A local benefactress purchased the building on Fort Hill, the highest point in town and site of an old military post, out of regard for its historical significance. She soon agreed to sell most of it to Post 54. The steeple and clock she left to the town; the joint tenancy continues to this day.

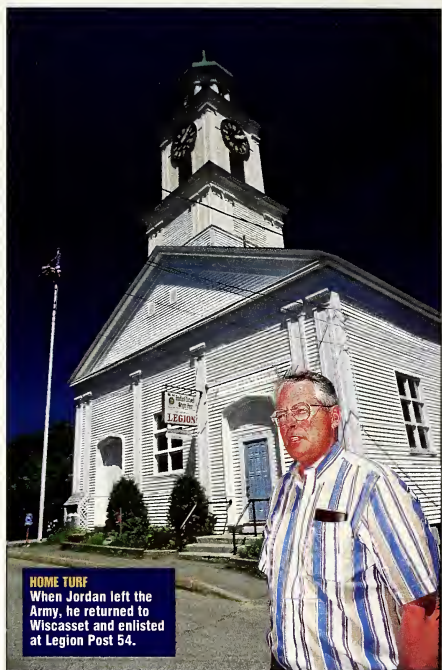
If one word describes the new National Commander, it is "Competitive." It's been written that to Enzo Ferrari, any race his factory team had not won was a thrown glove. "I can't say 'no'," is the equivalent Jordan mantra, and the message Legionnaires will get is: "I—all of us—must master every worthy challenge."

Jordan's wife, Claudette, notes that when they're strolling, he soon picks up the pace, stretching it out. Tony muses he can start a friendly game of golf, but before it's over, he'll be hard-charging to the final putt.

Call it the Jordan Reflex. In high school, it motivated him to letter in four sports: track, baseball, basketball and cross country and to an academic record rich with scholarship possibilities. But family necessity sent Jordan to Waltham, Massachusetts to tend to ailing grandparents. Shortly thereafter, Uncle Sam sent him greetings.

In the Legion, the Jordan Reflex carried him to two terms as Post commander, one concurrent with simultaneous service as County, District and Department commander. Among the offices he has held at the National level: chairman of the National Security Commission, chairman of the Membership and Post Activities Committee, chairman of the National Foreign Relations Council, National Executive Committeeman (and alternate). He also served as a member of the National Subcommittee on Committees, and was liaison to the National Finance Commission.

There is a duality to Jordan's focused, insensate energy: "Work hard, play hard." And Jordan would like to see Legion family members having



HOMER TURNER
When Jordan left the Army, he returned to Wiscasset and enlisted at Legion Post 54.

more fun through Post activities.

"I'm the kid who joined to go bowling," he notes. "Legion Posts have things they're good at, projects they enjoy. They need to focus on their strengths, on what their communities need. If Posts have good programs, their membership will grow."

Post 54's programs include bingo for fun and profit, school participation and scholarships for Americanism and Children & Youth, and decorating the downtown with flags on patriotic holidays—something Jordan suggested and

initiated. Wiscasset welcomes visitors with a sign informing them that they are entering Maine's prettiest village; that's no modest claim but not one to be casually doubted. And to see the bright, tidy, historic downtown rippling with Old Glory on a sunny Fourth of July would be worth the trip.

In fact, the most remarkable thing about Maine folk, after the ready friendship they offer and the Grape Nut custard at Moody's Diner, is their dedication to order. Jordan lived in Wiscasset 35 years, graduating from high school (in 1958) and raising three children. He now lives in Augusta.

William "Bill" Kierstead, who still lives across the street from the former Jordan homestead in Wiscasset, retired from Central Maine Power Company in 1972. He recalls attending local high-school basketball games to watch a young Jordan play. "He was a go-getter. It doesn't surprise me that he's getting this office."

As he winds up his farewells at the Post, Jordan offers two apologies: He probably won't have time to get back to them much during his year of representing the Legion and that he's conscripting former Post Commander Walter Miete, friend, mentor and Department chaplain, to be his aide.

During his term, Jordan says, there will be emphasis in promoting the passage of a constitutional amendment to protect Old Glory from acts of physical desecration. The American Legion-proposed GI Bill of Health, and the benefits of Paid-Up-For-Life (PUFL) mem-

MEET ANTHONY G. JORDAN

Born April 4, 1940.
Portland, Maine

Residence Augusta, Maine

Family Married to the former Claudette M. Thibodeau. Six children: Kevin, Renee, Kimberly, Mark (stepson), Kevin (stepson), and Stephanie (stepdaughter)

Military Service United States Army, 1963-65

Legion Affiliation Bradford-Sortwell-Wright Post 54, Wiscasset, Maine

Occupation Senior technical buyer, Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company.

Affiliations Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks,

Lodge No. 964, ANAVICUS (Army, Navy, Air Force Veterans in Canada and United States)

Civic Office Serves as a public member of the Governor's Board of Registration for Professional Engineers, State of Maine

Hobbies & Sports Basketball, baseball and golf

berships, and more emphasis in educating and training Post service officers. "These are my priorities," he says.

As a Legionnaire who has served at every level, Jordan has definite ideas on the Legion's direction and emphasis. As a member of a Post where pool tournaments are played on a century-old table, he knows the Legion's heritage and the strength of its grass roots.

The dais of the meeting room is flanked by two windows overlooking the Sheepscot River harbor on Sheepscot Bay and the village's first railhead. Wiscasset's young men traveled the Maine Central Railroad to be inducted and later journeyed across the Atlantic to Europe. These same men, after having founded Post 54 and bringing it to maturity, would watch and pray as the next generation traveled the same railroad to World War II.

Their names—and many others—are on a new monument on the municipal building lawn, one of Post 54's proudest achievements. "It's not a memorial," states Jordan. "It's a scroll of honor." The marble and granite blocks list all Wiscasset citizens, living and dead, who have served in the armed forces and in the militia that predates the nation. Jordan's name is on it, along with those of many friends.

To Jordan, the Legion is as much about friendship as anything. "One thing I've found is that nothing can take our friends away from us. I've never met and made friends like I have in this organization. It's tremendous. I think that's probably what gives a lot of the life to our Legion."

Solid friendships important in Jordan's formative years remain. One of his high school friends, Chuck Shea (also a Legion member of Post 54), is at the same school, though now a math teacher, and he and Jordan get together as time allows for golf and memories.

"Tony ate a lot of meals with us, actually like a brother. If he said something we didn't like, we'd tell him," Shea recalls. "Tony was quite an athlete. On two state championship cross country teams, he was in the top five." Jordan also has a blood brother, Robert, of Maine's Waldoboro Post 149.

Also still at Wiscasset High School is Gene Stover, then Jordan's coach and since a friend. Coaching posed special challenges in the Wiscasset of the late 1950s, and when it proved that the only possible cross country course involved village streets and a stretch of state highway, Stover and his ad hoc staff

would undertake to stop traffic as Jordan, his teammates and his competitors hastened by.

"Tony was the leader in his class," Stover says. "In the classroom, in practice, in competition, Tony would always do a little extra, turn in more. He volunteered for everything."

At Wiscasset, students leave or graduate but the connection is never given up. "Our students are always coming back, to talk or help out," says Stover. "Even on holidays or in the summer they come back, they all come back to visit...sometimes we have to shoo them out. We keep a bulletin board for clippings on our students after



ARMY PVT. JORDAN, 1963



FATHER OF THE BRIDE Tony and Claudette are flanked by their children on their daughter's wedding day. Jordan believes unity is the source of strength not only for individual families but also for The American Legion family.

they're out in the world," indicating Jordan is not the least-noted of alumni.

Whether on the baseball diamond or in running shoes, Jordan assumed the leadership role, Stover remembers. "He was the kind of guy who, when somebody kind of lost sight of things a bit, could walk over and say... 'Relax, take it easy, we'll try it again'."

Stover is one of those who can confirm that Jordan has passed one of the toughest tests of leadership imposed in late 20th century America. While coaching a Babe Ruth team, Jordan faced a tide of parents convinced their help and expertise were urgently needed. Though appreciative of their interest and support, Jordan patiently counseled that their numbers and ardor might lead to confusion and embarrassment among his players. He persuaded the parents to return to the stands without resorting to

Billy Martin-type tantrums.

Jordan's interest in youth programs remains innate though his children are grown and living throughout the United States. Through these mid-June days, as he ties up Legion loose ends and Maine Yankee obligations, he'd much rather be at the Maine Maritime Academy as the annual Boys' State unfolds.

Jordan's summary of his Legion service and ambitions does not contradict anything his friends and neighbors have to say about him. "I'm a grassroots, community-oriented person, and I think I have something to offer."

And for the next 12 months, Anthony G. Jordan will lead the world's largest veterans organization with the same energy he lavishes on all challenges.

Legionnaires, observe the Jordan Reflex at full throttle. □

COURTESY OF A. J. JORDAN

SHOOTING SPORTS CHAMPIONSHIP

YOUNG GUNS



ZERDING IN
Precision winner Sarah Jacobson of Oregon concentrates on the target.

Junior shooting sports stars draw a bead on excellence in attitude and solid marksmanship.

LIZABETH SMITH'S petite, 5-foot 1-inch frame doesn't seem intimidating as she stands at the firing line during The American Legion Junior Three-Position Air Rifle National Championship. The stuffed heart and lizard she attaches to her scope stand as she prepares to compete are also unthreatening in the extreme. What intimidates is her consistent, precise shooting, something she attributes to her good-luck charms. "They relax me and help me to concentrate," says the Minnesota native.

Spectators notice Sebastian Paquette's youthful face and innocent glance as he prepares his equipment for competition. They also notice what the 14-year-old calls his "England Shooting Hat," which he proudly wears backwards, hair tucked underneath. A necessity, he says, in any shooting match.

Wendy Whisman, last year's Sporter category national champion, stands motionless at the firing line, her eyes measuring a distant target as her hands grip a rifle painted with the colors of the rainbow. "I wanted something different, something with some cool colors," she says of the rifle that looks like a tie-dye artifact of the 1960s. "It makes shooting fun."

On the floor behind Maxim

Shub rests a pair of run-down black hiking boots that he ritually steps into after each match. They are his lucky boots, he quietly affirms, and he doesn't compete without them near.

Four competitors as different as night and day. They, like the other 20 shooters at this year's tournament, came prepared to win. The competition, conducted Aug. 6-10 at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, brought together some of the finest young shooters in America.

By definition, the 24 competitors were winners before they stepped off the plane in Colorado, having qualified ahead of 1,340 other shooters. While standing at the firing line, all shared similar equipment, similar determination and similar game faces. But each brought an individual piece of themselves to the line, be it a lucky stuffed animal, a familiar article of clothing or a winning attitude, that added a unique flavor to the intense competition.

The match, the seventh since inception in 1990, is divided into two categories: Precision and Sporter. The primary difference is the sophistication of the equipment—precision rifles cost more and are more refined. Twelve shooters compete in each category, all displaying their skill from three positions: prone, kneeling and standing.

Preparation entails equipment set-up and mental concentration. After a three-minute prep period, shooters step to the firing line, settle into position, and await the chief range officer's command: "The line is ready.... Commence firing."

With rifles held steadily in position, the shooters face the challenging task of aligning the rifle's rear and front peep-hole sites with a target the size of a silver dollar 10 meters (33 feet) down range. Once aligned, the shooter must exhale, hold perfectly still and pull the trig-



MARKS THE SPOT
Official Jack Duncan reviews with a contestant the results of her shooting on the first day of competition.

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SHOOTING SPORTS CHAMPIONSHIP



WINNING COMBINATION
Second-place Precision finisher Elizabeth (I) and Jacobsen hope to attend college on shooting scholarships.

"Most try to beat their own personal best rather than beat their competitor."
—Stacey Campbell

ger, firing a pellet the size of a pea at 510 feet a second toward the target's center.

"When the kids are on the line, they are extremely disciplined," says Match Director Dave Rehbein. "So much so that they can time their shots between heart beats."

Discipline is what sets this sport apart from other sports that rely primarily on physical strength. "One of our shooters was 4-foot-11 and one was 6 feet tall," says Chief Range Officer Marlene Duncan. "The good thing about this program is that you don't have to be big, strong or fast. You do need to be able to stand still, concentrate and focus because 95 percent of this sport is mental."

Indeed, mental concentration is the name of the game. And it is an art form that the shooters have mastered in diverse ways. Seventeen-year-old Mathew Cohen, battalion commander with his Junior ROTC at Lowell High School in San Francisco, thinks of jokes to relieve his tension, while Indiana's Wendy Whisman says a prayer asking God for guidance.

This year's Precision winner, Sarah Jacobsen, says, "I just try to relax and tell myself to have fun with it. That is how I unwind."

For Sarah, it works. Nicknamed "Ice Woman" by her fellow shooters in Oregon, she displayed her ability to stay cool under fierce pressure in a final competition that involved three lead changes and a round that produced all perfect scores, a first in the Legion competition.

"I have never been in a tougher match," says the 16-year-old shooter, sponsored by Capital Post 9. "I was behind going into the finals, but I was confident that I could make up the points."

And with each shot, her confidence grew. At one point, she bobbed her head back and forth as if she was listening to her favorite song on the radio.

Her final aggregate score of 2424.2 barely edged out second-place finisher Elizabeth Smith of Minnesota (2422.7), who managed an

even smaller margin over third place finisher Crystal Dove of Georgia (2422.6).

Since records are made to be broken, the Precision finalists did their best to shatter as many as possible. Four of this year's top five Precision shooters hold records for the highest scores in national junior shooting competition. First-place finisher Jacobsen turned in a new standing position record of 765 out of a possible 800, and second-place finisher Elizabeth Smith broke the kneeling record with a score of 785 out of 800.

The Sporter shooters fared well, too. Bradley Wheeldon, sponsored by Somerset/Pulaski County Post 38 of Kentucky, entered the final round a solid 18 points ahead of second-place finisher Don Truax of Virginia. Wheeldon turned in a final score of 2298, Truax a 2272.9.

"It feels great to win," says Wheeldon, a Marine Corps Junior ROTC cadet. "I have been practicing this good for a while, so I knew I could do it."

Above the fancy shooting, the benchmark of the competition is the camaraderie. A round did not go by without one shooter congratulating another, offering words of encouragement or help, as in the case of David Harvey, a Texan, who offered Hank Gray of Montana a spare rubber seal to replace the one Gray's rifle blew during competition.

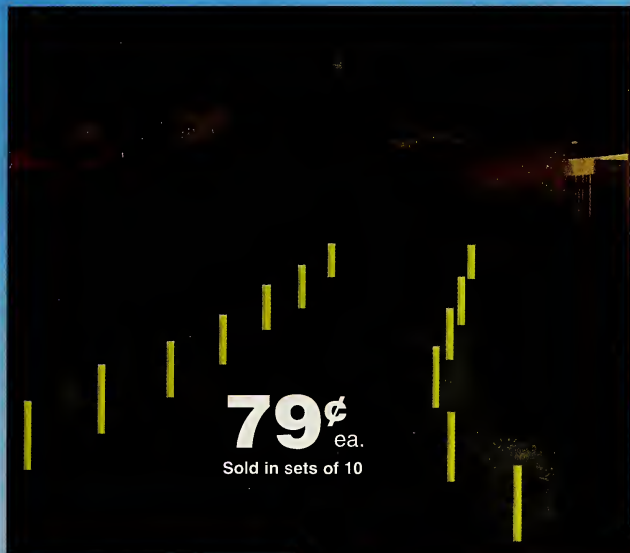
"I like this sport because you don't have to hate your opponent," says 18-year-old Stacey Campbell of Iowa. "Most try to beat their own personal best rather than beat their competitor. That is what makes it special." □

—By Julie A. Rhoad



SHOOTING STAR
Sporter rifle champion Bradley Wheeldon of Kentucky is taking aim at qualifying for the U.S. Olympic team.

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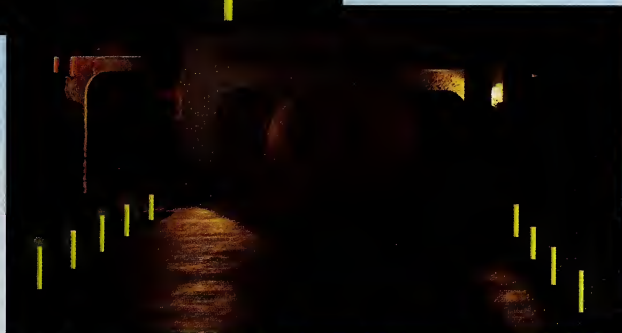
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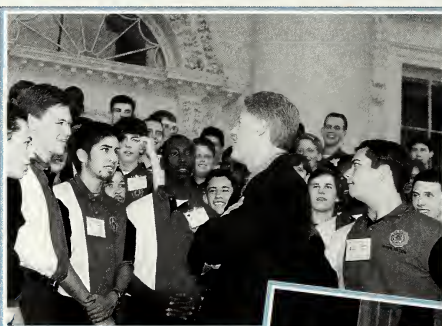
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Boys Nation Trains Young Leaders

LAST SUMMER, 96 high school boys descended on Arlington, Virginia, near Washington, D.C. They held their own elections, conducted senate sessions, participated in floor debates and passed bills into law, all part of American Legion Boys Nation.

These young men have been bringing their ideas, enthusiasm and records of success to Boys Nation since 1946. This year's group met at Marymount University for a week of training that involved lectures, field trips and issues that were important to them. Several of the issues tackled dealt with crime and drug laws, but education was the most important topic to Boys Nation President Sterling Dowling. "Children are the future," he says. "The United States must stay in the race with other countries in the area of education. We can't fall behind because the repercussions would be too great."

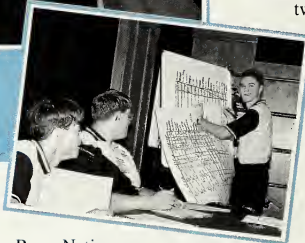
Field trips included visits to Capitol Hill where the students visited with senators from their home states, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Fort McHenry in nearby



EXECUTIVE ACTION Boys Nation Senators learn from one another and from recognized authorities like President Bill Clinton, himself a Boys Nation alumnus. Each summer 96 young men take part in the program which includes field trips to Washington, D.C., landmarks.

Baltimore, the Department of State and the White House. A visit with Boys Nation alumnus President Bill Clinton ranked near the top of the students' week in Washington.

Meeting Clinton was an "awe-inspiring" experience for Dowling. "President Clinton is a charismatic leader who makes you feel at home," he says. "I was near the front of the line and he showed the same warmth to the very last person in line as he did to me."



Boys Nation instills an understanding of the federal government in the young senators which they will carry with them into the future. The delegates were chosen to represent their home states after participating in American Legion Boys State, the Department-level version that results in selection of delegates to the national gathering of some of the nation's best.

Dowling, of South Carolina, will be a senior at Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School, where he is a member of the student council and the debate team. From his experience as president, he will "take away the confidence of knowing that 95 other individuals had the confidence in me, my abilities and my capabilities."

Dowling plans to study law at Atlanta's Morehouse College but isn't sure if he will pursue a career in politics. "I'll cross that bridge

when I come to it. I would hate to enter politics as it is now. My morals and convictions are too strong."

But after a week as Boys Nation vice president, Jason Cipriano's political ambitions are stronger. Cipriano, of New Hampshire, plans to attend the U.S. Naval Academy to study astrophysics, but considers adding political science as a minor.

"I really don't see how the two are going to intertwine yet, except that I see technology as a major factor in many future political issues," says the Boys Nation vice president.

Boys Nation, directed by the National Americanism Commission, experiences such success largely due to the hands-on learning it offers students. The delegates learn how government works instead of passively reading about it from a history book or news magazine.

New Jersey's Henry Ho, the president pro tempore of the Boys Nation Senate, cited a desire to participate as one reason he decided to run for office. "I wanted an opportunity to become involved and I wanted to learn more about the federal government through participation."

Through this interaction of ideas and personalities, the delegates of Boys Nation become senators for a week and experience the workings of their government. Just as Dowling pointed out that the children are the future, so are these 96 senators, and they will someday play a large role in America's future. □

MISIDENTIFIED HEROES

A PHOTOGRAPH under the headline "Honored Heroes Visit Veterans" in the July issue featured three recipients of the Medal of Honor—but not the three we listed. The caption should have identified (from left) Gary L. Littrell, James R. Hendrix and Charles MacGillivray as medal winners. The other gentleman in the photograph is Richard Silver, director of the James A. Haley VAMC in Tampa, Florida. We apologize for the error. □



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These results were published in one of the world's most respected and important medical journals "The Lancet". *The Lancet* is rated among the top 10 of over 200 international medical journals. The results of this fully documented research is the first of its kind, and proves the 100% natural ingredient in **PROST-AID NS** work.

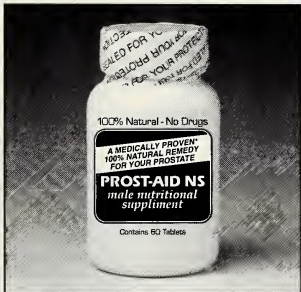
Additional studies have been reported in other publications, using different methods of research. The findings of these studies support the effectiveness of the 100% natural (Beta-Sitosterol) ingredient which is found in **PROST-AID NS**.

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- ☒ improves peak flow of urine
- ☒ reduces urine retained in the bladder
- ☒ improves patient IPSS and their quality of life



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The medical research results reported in *The Lancet* include:

- of men tested, the peak flow of urine increased 5.2 milliliters per second.
- urine retained in the bladder was reduced by an average of 35.4 milliliters.
- a 7.4 point improvement in IPSS (Int'l. Prostate Symptom Scores) was recorded at both the 3 and 6 month measurement marks.
- overall quality of life improvement was seen in the Beta-Sitosterol group, with no negative impact on their sex life.

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Chaplains Discuss God & Country

EXPLAINING the existence of God can confuse those without faith. Perhaps a less monumental, though still bewildering task, entails explaining the duties of a chaplain.

Nonetheless, a devotion to God and Country leads many in The American Legion to

try. "The chaplain service offers the opportunity to help others," says Dr. Charles Richmond, immediate Past National Chaplain. "We answered the call to serve our nation in time of war, and now we answer the call to serve God by helping others."

According to *The American Legion Chaplains'*

Handbook, the duties include such far-reaching tasks as:

- Providing spiritual leadership through the Legion's "Service to God and Country" program
- Communicating with officers, members and other community organizations
- Attending all regular Post meetings

• Taking part in the rituals and ceremonies of The American Legion

• Creating and maintaining an active religious emphasis committee

• Participating in February's Religious Emphasis Week and Four Chaplains Sunday

• Making the chaplaincy practical and beneficial to the Post, its members and community.

Department chaplains discussed these and other topics at their annual meeting in Indianapolis last August.

One high point of the program included an update on The Chapel of Four Chaplains by Father James E. King, and the memorial chapel near Philadelphia planned to honor the memory of the four chaplains who gave their lives so that soldiers might escape the sinking *USAT Dorchester*. Donations for the memorial may be sent to: The Chapel of the Four Chaplains, P.O. Box 1943, Valley Forge, PA 19482-1943.

JOOSTEN NAMED SCOUT OF THE YEAR

DAVID JOOSTEN of Balaton, Minnesota, left nothing to chance. The 1997 Eagle Scout of the Year simply did as much as he could—and did everything well.

Outside of Scouting, Joosten was one of three valedictorians in his class, played in the school band, taught Sunday school, was a member of three varsity sports, served as student council president, was a member of the honor society and completed hundreds of hours of community service. He doesn't just participate, though, he excels.

Such a hectic schedule has others wondering if he ever rests. "This weekend I didn't get much sleep," explains Joosten. It seems that along with going to the prom he was reaping the rewards of his academic and extracurricular prowess. Joosten also attended three scholarship banquets, receiving honors from his school, his church and the University of Minnesota, his future alma mater.

Joosten has received additional funding from Tylencol, J.C. Penney, Robert Byrd,

Carnival, Triple A and his local Boy Scout council.

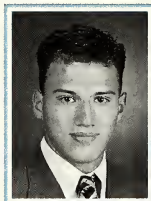
Of all the contributions, though, Joosten holds his Boy Scout scholarships in the highest regard. Being an active Scout for the past 12 years, he admits it was his favorite activity. Fond memories of camping and canoe trips, helping tenderfoots earn merit badges, a week-long trip with his troop in the Black Hills and the satisfaction of earning his Eagle all helped color his Scouting career.

For his Eagle project, Joosten chose to rejuvenate a city park. Equipment had fallen into disrepair and the buildings were peppered with graffiti. The ambitious Life Scout solicited \$700 from the city, purchased the necessary supplies and recruited and managed 14 workers. "I thought it was unique how so many people of all ages came together, willing to help with a project that benefitted the community," Joosten says.

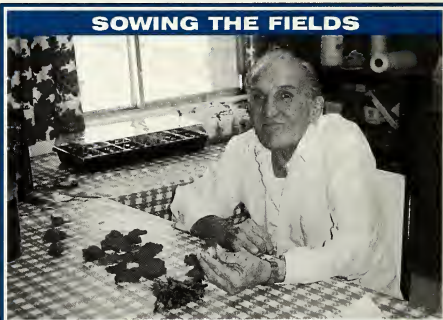
With college and a demanding class load on the horizon, Joosten has developed a miser's standard to-

ward personal time. "Minnesota's marching band has already asked me to join," says Joosten. However, the thought of arriving at college two weeks before everyone else and practicing 12 hours each day seemed a hefty endeavor for a Big Ten freshman. "I don't want to jump into too many things before I find out what college is really about."

Sage advice from a young man whose life so far reflects the imperatives of the Boy Scout Oath of staying physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.



JOOSTEN



The American Legion poppy is a symbol of all the fallen soldiers of Flanders Fields. They are handmade by disabled veterans and distributed for donations to help veterans and their children. Steve Spontic, Post 8, Utah, makes 25,000 poppies each year for the American Legion Auxiliary to market, as he has since 1961.

Has the open road lost some of its appeal?



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ARMY

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32nd Engr Const Grp, Hq Co (Korea, 51-54)

[illegible]

194th Tank Bn #14242
159th FFA Bn, A Btry (WWII) #19414
159th FFA Depot Co (Korea) #21866
159th FFA Bn, C Co #15121
197th FFA Bn, 3rd Co #11662
203rd AAA Avn, D Btry #15900
203rd AAA Avn Bn (WWII) #15879
217th General Hospital #21327
218th FFA Bn Btry A (Formerly 218th FFA Afl, Btry, 1st Platoon)
221st Army Band #20589
223rd Inf Station Asst (Korea, 51-54) #21114
223rd Inf Station Hospital #14201
237th AAA Avn Bn, 1st Co #11748
258th FFA Bn #9191 FFA Bn #14290
260th AAA Asst (DC, NG, WWII, Korea) #01312
265th FFA Bn, 1st Co #11525
276th Sig Co (Cons) #22062
282nd Engr Cg Bn, C Co (WWII) #13726
283rd Engr Cg Bn, 1st Co #11525
283rd Engr Cg Bn (WWII) #16726
284th Engr Cg Bn #10680
286th Engr Cg Bn #23385
286th Engr Cg Bn, 2nd Co #11525
287th Engr Cg Bn, H&S Co (NATO, ETO, WWII) #11530
290th Amb Bn, Engr Co #22231
300th Gen Hospital (WWII) #16120
303rd Army Band #20784
303rd Sig Bn (ETO, WWII) #12402
303rd Sig Bn, 1st Co #11525
303rd Sig Bn, 2nd Co #11525

NAVY

15N NCB 18391
 15N NCB (Acorn RED 2, WWII) #18016
 21st NCB #20388
 23rd NCB #14711
 57th NCB (42-45) #18026
 64th NCB (WWII) #18996
 68th/44th/138th NCB #22159
 68th NCB #14843
 124th NCB #18956
 125th/130th NCB (WWII) #18655
 AATC (Pacific Beach Wing) #11459
 A/E Early Warning Sqs, PAC (WEEBARRONPAC, 45-46)
 AG-87 #14564
 Armed Guard: OH/MH/IKX Assn #22889
 Army Air Corps (WWII) #11030
 Army Guard: USAT George Washington #22202
 ARU-45 (Guadalcanal, 43-45) #21941
 ATR-60 (44-46) #22475
 B-24 Liberator: 4th Bomb. Grp (44-45) #11687
 B-29 (44-46) #22209
 CAG-11 (Guadalcanal, 1st, MST, SOG (Danang)) #20379
 CAG-11 (Guadalcanal (WWII) #18256
 CASU-1 #21162
 CASU-22 (43-45) #14946
 CASU-38 (WWII) #12684
 CASU-76 #18340
 CASU-F #22209
 CDD-107 #22207
 CDDU-347 #11606
 Flying Boatmasters (Purdue Univ) #17494
 F7F 926 Squadron (Guam, 44-46) #12786
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 HAW-100 (WWII) 100-12 (all descendant)
 HQ #18572
 HS-2: Helicopter Anti-Submarine ("C") #21490
 I-401 #18572
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 LI (L) 696 #14813
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 LI (L) 699-122313
 LI-5 (F) 94-1672313
 LI-5 (F) 95-167-320 (WWII, Aleutians) #11478
 LI-589 #17453
 LCJU 709 #21185
 LM-495 (L) #13797
 LSM-16 (WWII) #28344
 LSM-289 #18333
 LSM-326 #11486
 LSM-365 (WWII) #22398
 LSM-500 #1786
 LT-1046 (PTD, WWII) #11607
 LT-1049 #30308
 LT-1153 #23015
 LT-129 #22322
 LT-223 #10177
 LT-317 (WWII) #19337
 LT-318
 LT-372 #17554
 LT-381 #12409
 LT-383 #14557
 LT-399 (Okunawa, Japan) #19313
 LT-480 #17593
 LT-484 #23699
 LT-498
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KEVORKIAN

Continued from page 33

her last years writhing in pain. Kevorkian has described her agony as "a horrible toothache" that tormented every part of her body.

Years after her death, his sisters told him they had made a request to their mother's doctor—a request to end her suffering. That request was denied.

Losing both parents in such a short time, and believing his mother didn't have to endure her terminal pain, deepened a preoccupation with the process of dying that had already been noted in Kevorkian's professional life. He had earned the moniker "Dr. Death" at Detroit Receiving Hospital because of the fascination he displayed in observing deaths during his rounds—a fascination that sometimes caused him to exploit the hospital's procedural laxity. One night, upon arriving in a dying patient's room, Kevorkian quickly set up his bulky camera, taped her eyelids open and photographed her pupils to pinpoint the instant of death.

He went on to conduct another series of bizarre experiments at Pontiac General Hospital, tapping the jugulars of DOAs and transfusing their blood into volunteer medical technologists. One exchange resulted in the recipient complaining of dizziness and a funny taste in her mouth. For a brief moment, Kevorkian thought he had poisoned his volunteer.

SOME preliminary work would have attributed the patient's cause of death to a car accident—a result of driving drunk. The high blood-alcohol level wasn't discovered until Kevorkian performed the autopsy.

As Kevorkian began publishing his unprecedented experiments and findings in prominent medical journals, his notoriety began to grow. Overall, in fact, few doctors in the history of the AMA have received more press. For this reason, perhaps, a recent Gallup Organization survey showed that 50 percent of the American public believes it should be legal for doctors to participate in assisted suicide.

Still, fellow proponents of assisted suicide are unnerved by his kamikaze tactics and have opted for a more conservative course—as well as a more credible candidate.

While other cases flounder in state- and appellate-court traffic, Kevorkian's cause sped along the legal expressway to the Supreme Court. Two similar cases,

Vacco v. Quill and *Washington v. Glucksberg*, were chosen for the high court's docket, and neither were associated with Kevorkian.

Proponents believed that if a Kevorkian case went to the Supreme Court, assisted suicide would be less on trial than the practitioner himself—a valid fear, no doubt, considering that at the beginning of his April '96 trial, Kevorkian appeared at the Michigan courthouse dressed as Thomas Jefferson.

He also said he deemed it an honor to be compared to Dr. Frankenstein.

Making light of such a taboo subject can spin casual dinner conversation into uneasy silence. Yet with Kevorkian as the hook, some black humor has slipped into the mainstream. Jay Leno once quipped, "Dr. Jack Kevorkian's lethal injection machine has a snooze button. For people who want to live 10 minutes longer."

Political cartoonists also take their potshots. A recent drawing featured a caricature of Kevorkian admiring the newspaper headline announcing the mass suicide of the Heaven's Gate cult. The artist had Kevorkian croon, "Who says papers aren't printing good news nowadays?"

Supporters of assisted suicide wish to avoid being cast in such buffoonish light.

Even the National Hemlock Society has said, "Kevorkian is bad for the right-to-die movement." Yet even as these palbearers disparage Kevorkian's ethics and cringe at his audacious behavior, they quietly admire his tenacity. Largely due to Kevorkian's efforts, assisted suicide was propelled out of underground medical spheres and into the public limelight.

In light of this, it might be asked of Dr. Kevorkian: To whom will you answer? Not to the medical association. They have lifted your license. Not the law. Juries refuse to indict you.

Contemporaries such as former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop lambaste you, calling you "a serial killer who should be put away." Unfazed, you carry on—though it is illegal in every state for a doctor to administer a lethal injection. According to Greg Townsend, Oakland County assistant prosecuting attorney, your attorney finessed the issue by successfully arguing that "relieving pain was the primary concern, and death was a secondary result."

With that in mind, the question remains:

Would you respect a ruling against you by the Supreme Court or would you seek out another loophole?

Paging Dr. Kevorkian....



TAKING CARE

Continued from page 31

Forks, North Dakota, were surprised to open their front door to the North Dakota American Legion Commander himself, there to hand-deliver their NEF check. That grant allowed the Smarts to begin repairs after the flood. Many times a NEF check is the first, and often only, assistance that Legionnaires and their families receive.

After last spring's flooding, residents of East Grand Forks, Minnesota, had to discard all damaged electrical equipment. Because of the NEF, Jim and Doris Goust could purchase a new washing machine and dryer. Insurance and the aid they received from the Federal Emergency Management Agency did not cover these losses.

When veteran William Adams Jr., also of East Grand Forks, lost everything in his basement to the 1997 flood, he likewise applied for NEF aid.

"The grant was greatly needed and appreciated. With losses of over \$40,000 in my basement and minimal funds from FEMA," he writes in a letter of gratitude to The American Legion, "the money will be put to good use to get our lives back in order. I never expected to get this monetary return on my membership." He continues, "The world needs more organizations like The American Legion."

Individual Legionnaires are not the only ones to fall victim to disaster and to benefit from the National Emergency Fund. Occasionally Legion Posts sustain damage, leaving members without a place to meet during the hard times that follow disasters. When Post 133 of Alton, Indiana, lost nearly everything to flooding along the Ohio River last spring, the Post applied for and received NEF assistance that helped enable them to begin rebuilding. In the past, the NEF has helped Posts rebuild after fires.

The NEF assures Legionnaires that they will have somewhere to turn when adversity strikes. Even though the victims have repaired, rebuilt, recovered and, in some cases, replanted, disasters will continue.

If you are willing to help members of The American Legion family affected by natural disasters, donations may be sent to The American Legion National Emergency Fund, P.O. Box 6141, Indianapolis, IN 46206; or call (317) 630-1330 for information on donating by charge card.



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MERCIFUL

Continued from page 35

you need to know people well. That's probably the most fundamental difference.

Kevorkian is focused on the technologies of death. He sometimes makes decisions on limited knowledge, half an hour conversations. Clearly the publicity aspect of it has been problematic. I mean, dying in a van is as about as dark as you can get.

To his credit, he has forced the medical system and society to think about this issue. He has said that if doctors don't address the issue of terminal suffering, then he will. That put the gauntlet down in a way that's hard to ignore. Clearly the medical profession has to do better than Kevorkian. He has no skills of hospice or end-of-life care, doesn't have the ability to assess the patients psychologically.

Q. Will a physician's 10th or 20th death become as easy as prescribing penicillin, as foes have claimed?

A. I don't think this should be a job for specialists, death specialists. I think it should be hard. If it's done by primary care doctors who care for a population of patients, you're not going to be doing it often. It will be a rare event. So I don't think one person is going to have 20 deaths. I do think you don't want to make it too easy or so hard where people will have to lie or make it secret or take a gun to their heads because they don't have any other alternative. They're at least out of their agony, but that leaves their family devastated.

Q. If legalized, what preventive measures can be taken to protect patients from manipulative family members or unscrupulous doctors?

A. Here are the criteria: competent patients, terminally ill, with extreme suffering that can't be relieved, who are fully informed of the alternatives. But probably the most important safeguard is the independent second opinion by a person who is skilled in end of life care.

Then you have an open process that can be reviewed. Now, would this halt all abuse? It probably won't prevent every case. What you must ask is, is there abuse now? Is there pressure now? We stop life support out in the open now. Is that subject to the same pressures? Absolutely.

There are all these pressures right now. Yet we carry out those acts in the open, and we believe people can make good decisions in those circumstances. It seems to me all those pressures are much more dangerous in an underground system than in an open system.

Q. Although the Supreme Court was unanimous in upholding the state's ban on assisted suicide, it seemed to leave the door open for decisions to be rendered on a case-by-case basis. What has changed?

A. I don't think a great deal has changed as a result of the ruling. I think they more or less side-stepped the real issue. What they addressed was the relatively narrow question of, is there a right to assisted suicide and are laws that prohibit that kind of activity unconstitutional? If you take that in the broadest sense, nobody was arguing about a generalized right to assisted suicide. They answered a question that we were not asking. I don't think they answered the harder questions about the exceptional cases.

There were some good things that came from the case, however. It reinforced people's rights to avoid treatment that they don't want to have. It encouraged the use of good pain management in doses that might indirectly end a person's life. It supported the use of hospice care. But it didn't provide a lot of guidance on how to respond to the tough cases. It's sort of status quo in that regard. It's more of a green light for experimentation at a state level.

Q. Closer to home, if a patient now comes to you with a request to end their life, are you willing?

A. If you don't talk about it, if you are willing to help a person in secret, the law isn't interested in vigorously prosecuting these kinds of cases. But as I've said before, there are many problems with a secret practice. You can't count on that if you're a patient. If you're going to participate in such a momentous decision, it seems to me you'd want some documentation.

Q. What will be your next step?

A. I will be working to find the middle ground with the AMA and the American College of Physicians, in the areas of heavy sedation and stopping eating and drinking. If we can allow that, that's going to be a big step in the right direction. Those changes don't require changes in the law. Changing the law is hard, very contentious. I think there will be activity there, but I'm less enthusiastic about that.

BEAR NECESSITIES

Continued from page 20

a National Convention, Springfield (Virginia) Post 176 Children & Youth Chairman Richard Vatter sprang into action and had a sample bear sent to his Post.

"We used it all over the place—at meetings, dances, dinners, whatcha. And everywhere we went," Vatter says, "people gave money to support the project."

Vatter then went to the community. He contacted the area NFL franchise to see if they would help out. Washington Redskins quarterback Gus Frerotte and his wife, Ann, had just become parents, and then sent a donation right away. "With that endorsement," says Vatter, "I was able to write articles for local papers and get even more media coverage, and even more donations, and eventually, even more bears into the arms of kids who need them."

THOSE involved with Spinoza unanimously agree that it should be a high priority for every Post, Unit and Squadron.

Fuhrhop calls the project "a real 'feel-good' program which provides comfort and companionship to these youngsters, and is an activity in which even the smallest of Posts can be active."

"It's a truly heart-warming thing to do in a heart-wrenching time," Crawford says. "Every Post should experience this kind of giving." Vatter adds that just hearing the bear's tapes can bring a man to tears, and receiving letters from the children's parents only makes them flow more freely.

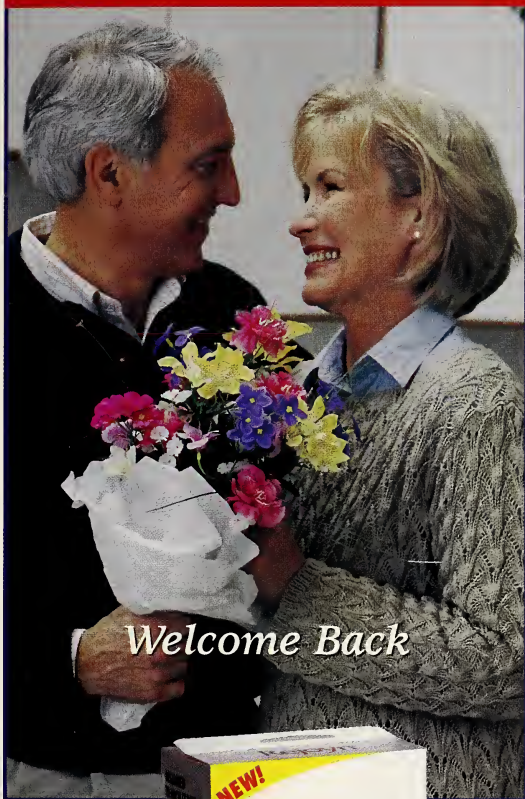
Vincent Buccigrossi, a Past Commander of Post 1872 in Kings County, New York, encourages Legionnaires to help kids in crisis. "When it comes to working with children, we all need to do as much as possible. That means helping individual children, and donating bears to hospitals to assist even more young people."

And the bears do make a difference, from the boy whose medications were changed to relieve pain to the girl whose vital signs improved moments after meeting her new friend.

Rockwell says Posts, Units or Squadrons wishing to sponsor a child can call Spinoza's "buddy bear project" at (800) CUB-BEAR.

—Trent D. McNeely

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ERNIE PYLE

Continued from page 48

things. Take the month of December 1935, when he wrote of a young woman who had defied the norms of her backwoods village by forcing her father to quit abusing her (she killed him); and of an Alabama man who so loved Roman history that he built a genuine Roman temple on a hill and fitted it out as a home for himself. Or June 1936, when he wrote of a semi-literate black man who made a fortune in the logging business; and of the solid, comfortable home an old squatter had built out of materials extracted from the Memphis city dump and daubed all over with paint the colors of the rainbow. Subjects like these were an apotheosis of commonness, a transformation of the ordinary into the sublime. They brought to life the American myth of self-recreation—a myth that appealed to Ernie because it lay at the heart of his own life.

He spoke to the reader directly using the pronouns "I" and "you" with a fresh sincerity that convinced people they knew Ernie Pyle as well as they

knew close friends. Because he confessed to be no better or smarter than anyone else—he was always referring to himself as "a screwball" or "puny Pyle"—he could deliver judgments without seeming to preach. And he gave opinions not to persuade or instruct, but simply as a friend gives them—as a conversational aside, a small sharing of oneself. When Lee Miller chopped these small phrases, as he did occasionally in the column's early years, Ernie fought back, defending "the 'little stuff' in my copy—the little personal phrases and opinions and asides, the stuff that I know was responsible for the success of the aviation of the column, and which I know readers do like to see, maybe just a word here and there, but really the heart of the thing." He fostered the sense of intimacy with columns about his mother, father and Aunt Mary. Though he had fled small-town life, these affectionate bulletins about the Pyles' doings in Dana made Pyle seem a champion of country ways and homespun verities. Jerry was idealized as "That Girl Who Rides With Me," or, as readers became accustomed to this little game, simply "That Girl." He might repeat a funny line of hers, or quote her pithy remark about something they'd seen, but as a rule he portrayed her in affectionate but hazy anonymity.

tions. In the summer of 1936, fighting an early battle against his editor's pencil, he told Lee Miller, "You'll probably think I've gone nuts... but lots of times when I'm describing some scene or feeling, I try to make it sound almost like music, and I think sometimes it does, and I think it does to readers, even though they may not be specifically conscious of it. And often the dropping of a word or the cutting of one sentence into two shorter ones destroys the whole rhythm of it. 'Ernie's quest for something 'like music' often succeeded, as in this meditation in the Berkshires: 'I must come someday and roam New England with greater leisure, and really know the things that now I am only beginning to sense, as you might sense the odor of fresh earth after the thaw, too young yet to know that it portends spring.' Or this scene from the grasslands of Montana's Powder River country, once lovely but now devastated by overgrazing and drought:

"The beautiful rolling green hills are bare, the color of the graveled road. Only now and then do you see a bunch of cattle; the others have prematurely gone to market, lest they wither away. The squat, treeless houses sit in the pitiless sun, far from the road, as always. Around them you see long rows of rusty, motionless machinery. You see the few work horses huddled along a dry creek, swishing the flies. There is no work for them in the fields. The farmers and cattlemen patch fences, or do chores, or just sit and wait."

To follow Ernie's daily column was to achieve a fleeting but satisfactory freedom. He offered Depression-era readers the vicarious expedience of an ageless American act—to "light out for the Territory," in Huckleberry Finn's words, to cast off the confining cords of civilization and pursue an ever-receding frontier. The romance of the open road, running as deep in the American tradition as the westward movement, ran always through Ernie's writing. A reader confined to a dreary desk or farm always found Ernie in some new spot, nourishing the reader's vicarious pleasure with reports of his own delight in sighting a new horizon and setting off. "The happiest I am at any time on a long trip is when we have been laid up several days in one place and then finally one morning we pack up, check out, fill up with gas, and light out into open country," he wrote. "Once in that car and under way, we don't have to talk to anybody, keep up with events... answer letters, remember things, or grudgingly fit ourselves into other people's worlds. We are alone, and free." □

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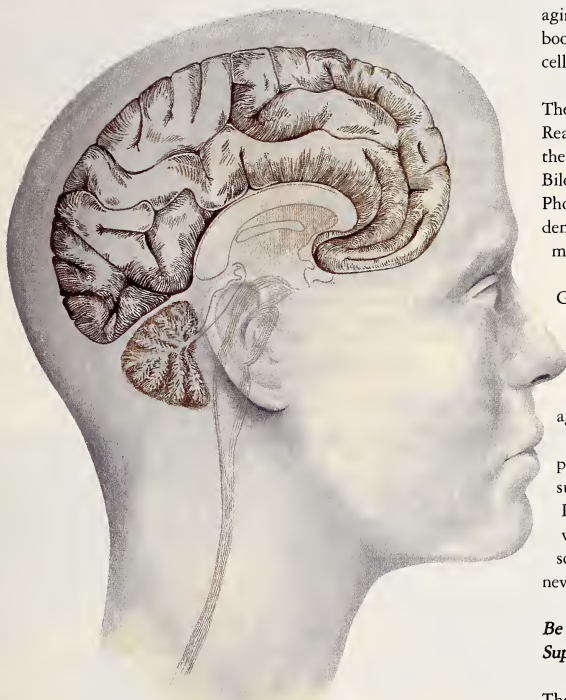
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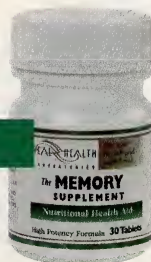
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55th Ftr Sq (Upper Heyford, Eng) #11451
81st Tac Ftr Wing (Bentwaters, Eng) #12579
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90th Air Refueling Sq (Caselle AFB, 53-55) #15023
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380th Bomb Wing (M), 373-375th Sq (308th A Refuel Sq (52-59) #21280
309th TCG (Ornex, France, 56-58) #21613
318th Ftr Sq (Rhuie, France, 54-54) #18986
324th Ftr Grp, 315th Ftr Sq #15146
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369 EAFR, C Co #19522
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474th Ftr Bomb Grp (Korea) #19540
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5th AARU (F) (Army Aircraft Unit, Floating) #12221
5th AF, 308th Airdrome Sq (PTD, WWII) #19787
5th AF, 38th SCU (New Guinea/PI 44-45) #18949
5th AF, 8th Ftr Ctl Sq (PTD, WWII) #16762
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8th AF, 388th Bomb Grp (WWII) #23694
8th AF Historical Society #1238
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8th AF Hist Society (PA Chap) #14737
9th AF, 313th TC Grp, 49th TC Sq (WWII) #11198
11th AF (all bomb sqs/tr sqs) #18710
12th College Trng Det (E N State Univ, WWII) #23109
13th AF, 307th Bomb Grp, 370th Bomb Sq #11096
13th AF, 42nd Bomb Grp, 69th Bomb Sq (WWII) #16589
17th Bomb Wing #19074
20th AF, 1st Aircraft Repair Unit (F) (WWII) #22662
20th Air Depot Sup Sq (Telergma/Algeria/ Naples/Italy, WWII) #15020
20th Combat Mapping Sq #16867
29th Bomb Grp (Guam) #13859
31st Ftr Wing, 307th/308th Sqs (WWII) #16658
32nd Trp Car Sq (ETO, WWII) #18794
36th Air Depot Supply Sq/ADG (Eng, Africa, Italy, WWII) #18915
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1st Mar Div, 1st Rgt, 3rd Bn, L Co (VN, 67-70) #17121
1st Mar Div, 3rd Amtrac Bn (Ces A-C Korea) #20309
1st Mar Div, 5th Rgt, 1st Bn, C Co (WWII) #11966
1st Mar Div, 5th Rgt, 3rd Bn (Korea) #10031
1st Rgt, 3rd Bn, Lima Co (VN) #19457
2nd Amtrac Bn (WWII) #19731
2nd Mar Div, 10th Rgt, 3rd Bn, "Forgotten Bn" Assn (WWII) #17088
2nd Mar Div, 2nd Med Bn, D Co (WWII) #23075
2nd Mar Div (Japan, 45-46) #22090
3rd Guard Ptn (Brooklyn Naval Yard) #22213
3rd Mar Div, 3rd Amtrac Bn (WWII) #13917
3rd Mar Div, 3rd Med Bn (VN, 65-67) #22726
3rd Mar Div, 3rd Rgt, 3rd Bn (66-67) #22239
3rd Mar Div, 4th Mar Rgt, 2nd Bn, HHQ #23388
3rd Recon Bn, D Co (VN, 65-69) #19117
4th Mar Div, "Fighting 4th" (WWII) #17223
4th Mar Rgt, 3rd Bn (25-28) #22307
5th Amphib Corps, 11th 155 MM Gun Bn, FMF #14351

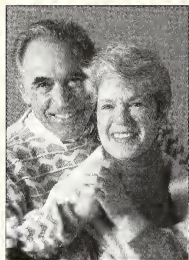
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Herbert Grannberg (1997) Post 86, Bethpage, NY.
Kenneth Kinson (1997) Post 37, Bellows Falls, VT.
Lavene Atkinson, Lloyd Engle (1997) Post 35, Albion, NY.

George McKinney, Edward O. Reitmeyer, Bernard A. Stuttle (1987) Post 88, Indianapolis, IN.

Robert Goldman, John W. Mickey (1988) Post 88, Indianapolis, IN.

Thomas E. Carrico (1990) Post 88, Indianapolis, IN.
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Paul R. Bellamy, George Ridle, Robert G. Spincer (1994) Post 88, Indianapolis, IN.

Paul E. Neumeister Sr., Joe D. Quarles, John M. Siler (1995) Post 88, Indianapolis, IN.

Robert Bales, John M. Brady, Leroy G. Callahan, Vincent Masaracha, Charles B. McCauley (1996) Post 88, Indianapolis, IN.

A. H. Pitcher, Mary C. Emmons (1997) Post 88, Indianapolis, IN.

John W. Reynolds, Ulderico Rizzo (1996) Post 82, Millville, NJ.

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John C. Pankok, Donald A. Schulze (1997) Post 137, Jacksonville, FL.

Bert Blic, August Greiner, Edward Mangino, William Wuestfeld (1970) Post 221, Ridgefield, NJ.

Enrico Curasco, Roy Larson (1986) Post 221, Ridgefield, NJ.

Clemens Fick (1989) Post 221, Ridgefield, NJ.

Frank Cartwright (1994) Post 221, Ridgefield, NJ.

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John H. Fleming, Gerald M. Leonard, William Terry (1997) Post 1122, Yonkers, NY.

Dillon J. McDermott (1997) Post 98, Rochester, NY.
L. Carey Bankhead (1997) Post 6, Moberly, MO.

Edward B. Beswick (1997) Post 82, Millville, NJ.
Rupert Philbrick (1997) Post 119, Guilford, ME.

Robert Liebman (1997) Post 6, Hillsboro, OR.
Walter E. DeLong, Hugh P. Wallace, Dennis F. Snell (1994) Post 0160, Seattle, WA.

LeRoy Bernard, Robert C. Kern (1995) Post 0160, Seattle, WA.

Joseph E. Pauly, Roland W. Ratledge, Kenneth J. Taverner (1997) Post 8, Winter Haven, FL.

Daniel Scheidel Jr. (1997) Post 1060, Mineola, NY.
Arthur C. Bywaters (1997) Post 30, Sarasota, FL.

William Martin, Bernard McDaniel, Edwin Motyka, Edmund Murphy, Louis Pitzer, Nelson Thornton, George Wetzel, Horace Gullins, Robert Gallardo, Tom Heppburn, Larry Johnson, Kenneth Lefler, Charles Long, Eldon Loud, Carl White, Barbara Wilder (1997) Post 189, Sebastian, FL.

Richard M. Walter (1996) Post 58, Guthrie, OK.

TAPS

Taps notices are limited to only those Legionnaires who have held high National or Department offices. We regret that we cannot extend the honor to all members.

Raymond J. Novak, SD, Nat'l M&PA Comm. (1965-66), Nat'l Americanism Council (1965-70), Nat'l Americanism Chmn. (1971-72, 1973-76), Nat'l V. Cmdr. (1972-73), Dept. V. Cmdr. (1956-57), Dept. Americanism Chmn. (1963-70, 1975-76), Dept. Oratorical Contest Chmn. (1963-70, 1975-76), Dept. Cdr. (1970-71), Dept. Employment Chmn. (1982-83).

Barney W. Greene, TN, Nat'l M&PA Comm. (1955-56), Nat'l Education & Scholarship Chmn. (1960-61), Dept. V. Cmdr. (1958-59), Dept. Boys State Chmn. (1960-61), Dept. Adjutant (1961-84), Dept. Finance Officer (1961-84), Dept. Child Welfare V. Chmn. (1961-57), Dept. Child Welfare Officer (1968-69).

Dept. Sgt-at-Arms (1959-60), Dept. Legislative Chmn. (1967-88).

Edward J. Klimke, NY, Nat'l Dist. Guests Comm. (1969-

70, 1974-75), Nat'l Americanism Council V. Chmn. (1972-85), Nat'l Aerospace Comm. (1987-93), Dept. Public Relations Chmn. (1972-78, 1979-82), Dept. V. Cmdr. (1974-75).

Genio Colasacco, OK, Nat'l Internal Affairs Commission (1973-88), Nat'l Americanism Commission (1987-97), Dept. Cmdr. (1974-75), Dept. Baseball Chmn. (1976-77).

Harold M. Zent, MT, Nat'l Dist. Guests Commission (1947-48-52), Nat'l Veterans Pref. Commission (1958-59), Nat'l Legislative Comm. (1977-78, 1985-86), Dept. V. Cmdr. (1950-51, 1975-76), Dept. Education of Orphans Chmn. (1952-53), Dept. Cmdr. (1976-77).

Robert G. Wilkie, WI, Nat'l Dist. Guests Comm. (1951-53, 1956-60, 1963-65), Nat'l M&PA Advisory Board (1965-66), Nat'l V&R Chmn. (1981-87, 1990-93), Nat'l Legislative Council (1981-84), Dept. Judge Advocate (1950-51), Dept. Adjutant (1951-81), Dept. Finance Officer (1952-57, 1960-63, 1969-70, 1972-73, 1974-76, 1977-81), Dept. Publications Chmn. (1958-59), Dept. Bonded Child Welfare Officer (1968-81), Dept. Internal Affairs Chmn. (1978-81), Dept. Trophies & Awards Chmn. (1978-97), Honorary Post Dept. Commander (1980).

Calvin J. Dodson, NV, Nat'l M&PA Comm. (1950-52), Nat'l Accident Prevention Comm. (1957-60), Nat'l Publications Commission Advisory (1958-62), Dept. Judge Advocate (1950-51), Dept. Second Vice Cmdr. (1953-54), Dept. V. Cmdr. (1955-56), Dept. Cmdr. (1956-57).

John V. Miraglia, MA, Nat'l Housing Comm. (1957-59), Nat'l Security Training Comm. (1958-59), Nat'l M&PA Comm. (1960-65, 1967-70, 1972-73), Nat'l Americanism Chmn. V. Chmn. (1963-72), Nat'l V&R V. Chmn. (1976-80, 1982-83, 1988-89, 1991-92), Nat'l V&R Chmn. (1977-78, 1980-81, 1986-87, 1989-90, 1992-93), Nat'l V&R member (1972-97), Nat'l Legislative Council (1979-84), Nat'l Rehabilitation Advisory Board (1980-81), Dept. Americanism Chmn. (1962-63), Dept. V. Cmdr. (1961-63).

Percy B. Voyles, IN (previously Dept. of Idaho), Nat'l Security Council V. Chmn. (1977-79), Nat'l Aerospace Comm. (1979-82), Dept. V. Cmdr., Idaho (1972-73), Dept. Cmdr., Idaho (1973-74).

John B. Brown, LA, Nat'l Public Relations Comm. (1974-77), Nat'l Security Council V. Chmn. (1977-87), Nat'l Children & Youth Commission Region 4 (1992-97), Nat'l Children & Youth Commission V. Chmn. (1996-97).

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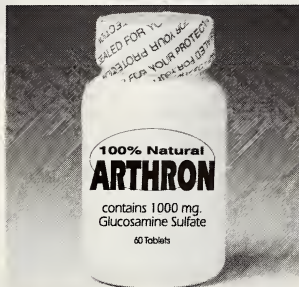
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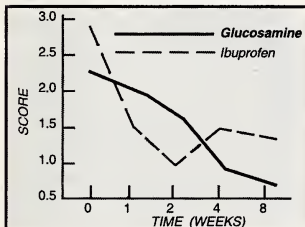
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While Gulf Vets Ail, Programs Fail

CONGRESS' chief investigative arm has a message for the federal government about its performance in helping ailing Gulf War veterans and researching the causes of the illnesses that are plaguing them: *You're not doing so hot.*

A General Accounting Office report released last summer, *Gulf War Illnesses: Improved Monitoring of Clinical Progress and Re-examination of Research Emphasis are Needed*, was prompted by a call from the Senate Armed Services Committee and the House National Security Committee to probe three aspects of the federal government's response to the medical needs of its Persian Gulf War veterans: the medical treatment government agencies (VA, DoD) offer Gulf veterans, the quality of its research into the nature of these veterans' health problems and the validity of the government's best take on the causes of Gulf War illnesses.

GAO investigators concluded the government has turned in a sub-par performance in all three areas. Investigators noted VA and DoD have conducted no formal studies to assess the effectiveness of medical treatment provided Gulf War veterans. They also criticized ongoing epidemiological studies as open to misinterpretation and lacking information explaining the causes for Gulf veterans' health problems.

"The GAO report validates what we've been saying all along, and that's not to rush to conclusions about the causes and treatment of troops with undiagnosed Gulf War illnesses until science can give us definitive answers," says National Commander Anthony G. Jordan.

That includes, adds Jordan, more focus on possible links between the troops' health complaints and low-level exposure to chemical weapons.

Finally, GAO rapped government agencies, particularly the Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses (PAC), for identifying stress as the primary risk factor in Gulf War illnesses. In a report issued last spring, PAC attrib-

uted the majority of health problems to stress, psychological or physiological. The Legion has not discounted stress as one source of the undiagnosed illnesses veterans have reported but has counseled against excluding other possible sources—or reaching conclusions before definitive scientific studies into the complaints are completed.

Since 1992, Gulf veterans have been eligible for free, complete examinations through VA's Persian Gulf Health Registry, and an estimated 65,000 Gulf veterans have taken health exams. Responding to charges of foot-dragging, DoD, in June 1994, established its own registry, called the Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program.

Meanwhile, VA continues to draw fire for its methods of offering medical treatment to sick Gulf War veterans. Testifying last month before a House Veterans' Affairs subcommittee, the Legion's point man on Gulf War illnesses said that despite its best efforts, VA's approach is ineffective, contradicting the Presidential Advisory Committee's finding that VA provides "high-quality health care" to America's Gulf War veterans.

"There is little evidence that VA's overall approach provides effective medical treatment to Gulf War veterans with difficult to diagnose and ill-defined conditions," says Matt Puglisi, a Gulf War veteran and the Legion's assistant director for Gulf War Veterans Task Force, based at the Legion's Washington office.

Puglisi said VA lacks a coherent treatment protocol to guide VA doctors in the nature and treatment of the illnesses reported by Gulf veterans. He called on VA to study medical outcomes as the surest way to gauge the effectiveness of its treatments.

For more information about referrals, assistance with filing disability claims or other services The American Legion offers Persian Gulf War veterans, call the Legion's Gulf War Hotline, toll-free, at (800) 433-3318; or access our home page at <http://www.legion.org>. The Department of Veterans' Affairs VA Persian Gulf Helpline number is 800-PGWVETS; and to find the number of the local VA office nearest you, call (800) 827-1000.

Gober Awaits Confirmation

A former American Legion adjunct for the Department of Arkansas is expected to become secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

At press time, Deputy VA Secretary Hershel W. Gober had yet to be confirmed by the Senate to replace Jesse Brown, who resigned his post last July.

Legion officials lauded the White House decision to appoint Gober; however, the Legion's constitution prohibits endorsements for any office, elected or appointed.

A member of Post 2, Monticello, Arkansas, Gober served three years in the Marine Corps and 17 years in the

Army and Army Reserve. Before his appointment as VA deputy secretary, Gober was the director of veterans' affairs in Arkansas and senior instructor for a Junior ROTC program.

Memorial Dedication Nears

The Women in Military Service for America (WIMSA) memorial is scheduled for dedication Oct. 18.

"The memorial will be incredibly beautiful, but it also will be educational because it tells a story and the history of women in service which should have been told a long time ago," says retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Wilma Vaught, president of WIMSA's memorial foundation.

The memorial, at the ceremonial

entrance of Arlington National Cemetery, will house a computerized registry of women's service records, exhibit alcoves and a 196-seat theater.

GI Bill in Spotlight

The 1944 Servicemen's Readjustment Act, better known as the GI Bill, will be the focus of a PBS documentary scheduled to air at 8 p.m. (EST), Wednesday, Oct. 22.

PBS officials publicized the documentary at the recent American Legion National Convention in Orlando. American Legion officials consulted with filmmakers during the production.

The American Legion developed and drafted the GI Bill and helped steer it through Congress. □

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TRAGEDY'S WAKE

Continued from page 28

says that's not what the agency does. FEMA can provide grants, he says, "but it is important for people to know that these grants are very limited and they are there just to help meet your emergency needs. Loan programs are available for more permanent restoration."

This is important to note because society faces an unprecedented prospect of natural disasters. According to William Gray, a doctor of atmospheric science at Colorado State University, this year's hurricane season is expected to increase in both size and strength.

ALL HOPE is not lost. Recently, FEMA has changed its approach to dealing with emergencies. When disaster strikes again, says FEMA's Valerie Bunting, the agency will be ready.

"After Director James Lee Witt was appointed to the agency in 1993, he was well aware of the deficiencies," explains Bunting, FEMA's director of emergency information and media affairs. "One thing he did was change the focus from what was primarily a civil-defense agency to one in which the focus centers around disaster response activities."

Many past complaints against FEMA stemmed from the application process. Victims complained of having to wait in long lines to file damage claims. They said the process was too time consuming and bureaucratic, and that monetary assistance was slow in materializing. To cure this, Bunting says FEMA has initiated a toll-free, national tele-registration line allowing victims to phone in requests for assistance. "It speeds up the amount of time victims get assistance," explains Bunting.

Another way FEMA is attempting to change is through early deployment. "If there is an oncoming hurricane," says Bunting, "we are now able to pre-deploy personnel and resources to the area prior to a disaster so that we are on the scene immediately."

Finally, through mitigation, FEMA is attempting to take a proactive approach to future disasters. Bunting says FEMA is establishing Disaster Resistant Communities aimed at promoting community responsibility. "We are trying to encourage residents

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to protect themselves before a disaster hits," says Bunting. Through this plan, FEMA will identify disaster risks to communities, develop appropriate response activities, educate communities on recovery planning and execute exercise programs.

Ultimately, citizens need to take the necessary steps to protect themselves. In areas prone to earthquakes, individuals can reduce potential damage by securing shelves and water heaters to walls, installing hurricane straps to securely attach a structure's roof and bolting homes to their foundations. In areas with high flood activity, residents can take measures to elevate the height of their hot water heater or electrical panel, buy flood insurance or relocate out of a flood plain. Those moving to a flood plain might want to take such drastic measures as elevat-

ing their dwelling.

Although no plan is completely disaster-proof, such preparation might result in fewer falling prey to Mother Nature's rage. □

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Margie looked at her boyfriend with great disapproval. "That's the fourth time you've gone back for more cake and ice cream, Sam," she said. "Doesn't it embarrass you?"

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Children Talk About Love

"No one is sure why it happens, but I heard it has something to do with how you smell. That's why perfume and deodorant are so popular." —Mae, age 9

"I think you're supposed to get shot with an arrow or something, but the rest of it isn't supposed to be so painful." —Manuel, age 8

"Love is the most important thing in the world, but baseball is pretty good, too." —Greg, age 8

"Lovers hold hands because they want to make sure their rings don't fall off since they paid good money for them." —Gavin, age 8

"Love will find you, even if you are trying to hide from it. I've been trying to hide from it since I was five, but the girls keep finding me." —Dave, age 8

"I'm not rushing into being in love. I'm finding fourth grade hard enough." —Regina, age 10

"One of you should know how to write a check. Because, even if you have tons of love, there are still going to be a lot of bills." —Ava, age 8

"Lovers will just be staring at each other and their food will get cold. Other people care more about the food." —Bart, age 9

"Don't forget your wife's name. That will mess up the love." —Erin, age 8



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